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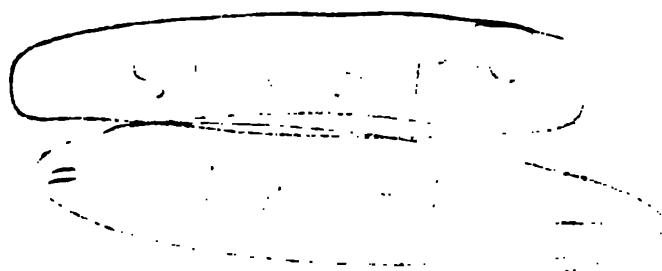
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**CIVIL WARS AND MONARCHY**

**IN**

**F R A N C E,**

**IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH  
CENTURIES.**





CIVIL WARS AND MONARCHY  
IN FRANCE,  
IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH  
CENTURIES:

A HISTORY OF FRANCE  
PRINCIPALLY DURING THAT PERIOD.

BY LEOPOLD RANKE,

AUTHOR OF 'A HISTORY OF THE POPES IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH  
CENTURIES.'

TRANSLATED BY M. A. GARVEY.

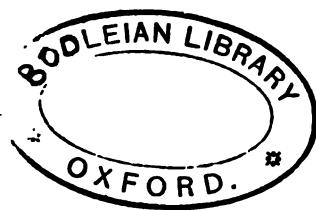
TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:  
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.  
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

1852.

237. b. 25



PRINTED BY  
JOHN EDWARD TAYLOR, LITTLE QUEEN STREET,  
LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS.

## CONTENTS.

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### BOOK IV.

#### FIFTEEN YEARS OF RELIGIOUS CIVIL WAR.

##### CHAPTER XV.

|  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| DISSENSIONS BETWEEN THE QUEEN MOTHER AND<br>COLIGNY.—ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY | 3    |

##### CHAPTER XVI.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| TRANSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT FROM CHARLES IX.<br>TO HENRY III. | 52 |
|--|----|

### BOOK V.

#### HENRY III. AND THE LEAGUE.

##### CHAPTER XVII.

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| INTRODUCTION | 98 |
|--------------|----|

##### CHAPTER XVIII.

|  |    |
|--|----|
| HENRY III. AND HIS GOVERNMENT DURING THE PEACE | 96 |
|--|----|

## CHAPTER XIX.

|   | PAGE |
|---|------|
| A GLANCE AT FRENCH LITERATURE . . . . . | 110  |

## CHAPTER XX.

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| COMPLICATION OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS . . . . . | 122 |
|---|-----|

## CHAPTER XXI.

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| ORIGIN OF THE LEAGUE . . . . . | 136 |
|--------------------------------|-----|

## CHAPTER XXII.

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| THE RENEWED WAR AGAINST THE HUGUENOTS . . . . . | 154 |
|---|-----|

## CHAPTER XXIII.

|                          |     |
|--------------------------|-----|
| THE BARRICADES . . . . . | 173 |
|--------------------------|-----|

## CHAPTER XXIV.

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| THE ESTATES OF BLOIS, 1588 . . . . . | 200 |
|--------------------------------------|-----|

## CHAPTER XXV.

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| RESOLUTION AND CATASTROPHE OF HENRY III. . . . . | 222 |
|--|-----|

## BOOK VI.

## HENRY IV. IN CONTEST WITH THE LEAGUE.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| ELEVATION OF HENRY IV. . . . . | 237 |
|--------------------------------|-----|

**CONTENTS.**

**v**

**CHAPTER XXVII.**

|                                     | <b>PAGE</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| CAMPAIGN OF 1589 AND 1590 . . . . . | 261         |

**CHAPTER XXVIII.**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| PREPONDERANCE OF THE SPANIARDS IN FRANCE.—      |     |
| PRINCIPLES OF THE LEAGUE AND OF SPAIN . . . . . | 283 |

**CHAPTER XXIX.**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| CAMPAIGN OF 1591 AND 1592.—ASSEMBLY OF THE |     |
| ESTATES OF 1593 . . . . .                  | 310 |

**CHAPTER XXX.**

|                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| RELIGIOUS CHANGE OF HENRY IV. . . . . | 339 |
|---------------------------------------|-----|



## **BOOK IV.**

**(CONTINUED.)**

**FIFTEEN YEARS OF RELIGIOUS CIVIL WAR.**



# HISTORY OF FRANCE.



## CHAPTER XV.

DISSENSIONS BETWEEN THE QUEEN MOTHER  
AND COLIGNY.—ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY.

GASPARD DE COLIGNY, the leader under whose conduct these great successes were obtained, was at that time perhaps the most renowned man living.

He belonged to an ancient race of the high Burgundian nobility. His father had, by the side of the King, acquired reputation in war and authority in the State. After his death, which occurred early, his widow, a sister of the Constable, who, as far as can be ascertained, inclined to the ecclesiastical reformation in its most general form, made the education of her three sons the object of her life.

Those who viewed the brothers together were

astonished at the diversity in their natural endowments. Odet, the eldest, who devoted himself to the clerical profession, and who, through his father's connection with the King, and the King's with the Romish See, was raised in his early years to the dignity of a cardinal, showed himself benevolent, generous, and amiable in his intercourse with others. Dandelot, the youngest, had a fiery disposition, which suggested the boldest schemes, and impelled him forwards to every enterprise proposed to him. Gaspard, the second, was meditative, spoke but little, and that slowly, and bestowed little attention upon others. He did not feel himself in his place at the Court, for he despised favours which were incompatible with the full consciousness of personal pride, and knew nothing of the art by which men exhibit a cordial bearing towards their enemies. He was much more at home in the camp, as Henry II. and his uncle wished, and was, in short, a thorough soldier. Here he emulated the bravest in contending for the prize of valour. He was distinguished before all others by his innate sense for discipline and the interior organization of an army; long subsequent to his times the regulations which he established for the discipline of troops were revived and applied in practice. With the same determination however he cared for the condition of his troops. He compelled the enemy to carry on the war according to the law of nations, by

the most impartial reprisals, and was almost terrible in his conduct towards the peasantry who laid hands on his soldiers. When besieged in St. Quentin, he drove the citizens who would not assist in the defence or in the labours of the fortification, out of the town without mercy ; and threatened the refractory with death. When, in spite of all his precautions, his chief rampart was taken by the enemy, he disdained to give ground with the flying, and coolly allowed himself to be seized by a Spaniard, whom he informed that he need not look for any further booty, as his prisoner was the Admiral of France. He has himself described this siege, not because he wished to excuse himself (for should any one complain of his conduct, he knew how to answer him as became a man of honour), but because so much that was false had been published to the world : every one who was present at an affair was bound to rectify erroneous representations of it. His simple narrative, a memorial of historical conscientiousness, shows, at the same time, a patriotic self-dependence and strong spiritual feelings. He sees the cause of misfortunes in the will of God alone,—in that inscrutable will to which he must submit as a Christian, without attempting to explore it. His change to the Reformed doctrine is usually dated from this imprisonment. In the full occupation and tempest of war, he could hardly have found the time for attending to religious questions with that

closeness which their importance and his own disposition would have demanded ; his captivity allowed him the involuntary leisure which they required. Calvin maintained a correspondence with him and his consort.

When he was set at liberty by the peace he introduced by degrees into his castle at Chatillon the Protestant domestic system, an example which many others afterwards followed. He himself conducted the morning worship, and collected all who belonged to the household upon appointed days and at certain hours to hear sermons and to join in the singing of psalms ; before the administration of the sacrament he endeavoured to reconcile all whom he knew to be at enmity with one another.

It was not his destiny however to live in the simplicity of the patriarchal state, as the priest and father of his household ; he was, as a great party chief, implicated in the affairs of France and of Europe.

I do not estimate the external struggles in which he was engaged by any means so highly as those he endured within. The former were the lot of every man then living. The contradiction between religious notions and civil duties, which no longer ran concurrently as formerly, made it necessary for every man to seek out his own course independently.

Every step the Admiral took had to be weighed and considered ; but the great vital question was

the first that called for decision. When Guise with his confederates took possession of the power of the state in 1562, and began to sap the edict of January, upon which rested the security of the Protestants, Coligny understood perfectly the extent of the power which the enemy had succeeded in attaining, and the impotence of the opposite party, which had as yet no permanent form. He knew what fallings off, what misfortune was to be expected there, and what danger, exile, or, it might be, death. He asked his wife if she had sufficient firmness of soul to encounter all this, and also the ruin of her children. This lady, Charlotte de Laval, was at this moment even more resolute than the Admiral himself, for it was not, she said, to oppress others that he took up arms, but for the rescue out of the fangs of tyranny of his brethren in the faith, whose torments would not permit her to sleep. He must renounce the wisdom of the world ; God had lent him the talents of a captain, and he was bound to use them, and if he did not fulfil this duty, she added that she herself would, when the day arrived, bear witness against him before the judgement-seat of God\*.

\* Aubigné, who, for example, knew nothing of the meeting at Bayonne, in whose book the excerpts from Thuanus, De la Planche, and others, may be distinguished, often however states portions of his own experience, and immediate communications of great value, which must be kept separate ; we here follow his narrative (*Histoire Universelle*, i. iii. 2) : he sets a high value upon

Whatever difficulties and dangers they might have resolved to brave, there were still heavier in store for them than they could have foreseen. In the midst of the wild passions which were enflamed by the union of party spirit and religion, of self-defence, of justice, and of vengeance, the way led at times to a moral abyss. When Poltrot undertook to avenge on their author the suffering brought on his co-religionists by Guise, Coligny did not encourage him, but neither did he prevent him: he allowed the retribution, as he understood it, to take its course.

How also, it will be asked, could he reconcile with the innate loyalty of his principles his conduct in opposing an army collected in the name of the King? Coligny always asseverated that he fought against a faction only, which had abused the name of the King. All that had been done against him, the judgements that had been issued against him, and the proclamation of outlawry, he attributed to the fact that this faction hated him, because God was making use of him for the good of his Church\*. Whilst the enemy were plundering his house of his wealth, he would not touch valuables belonging to the Court which fell into his hands. He never

it: "Comme une histoire que j'ai apprise de ceux qui étaient de la partie."

\* "Par la seule haine, qu'on me veut, de ce qu'il a plu à Dieu de se servir de moi pour assister son Eglise."—Letter to his Children, October 16, 1569.

spoke without deep respect of either the King, the Queen Mother, or of the Duke of Anjou, who stood opposed to him in arms. With these divided feelings he carried on the war.

The whole responsibility of the movement, with all the hatred to which it gave rise, fell by degrees upon his head; yet he was not completely master of the cause in which he was engaged. Recourse was had to arms and agreements were concluded without his full approval. This is the ordinary position of a party chief.

It was only in actual warfare, when engaged in battle with the enemy, that he paid no attention to the suggestions of his followers: on such occasions he was the general, and they were mere soldiers. He declared that it was much better he should be blamed without cause amongst his friends than that the enemy should have reason to turn him into ridicule. He was often defeated in the open field, but his nature was of that deep and persistent character whose masculine vigour increases with misfortune. "We had been ruined," said he once, in the words of the ancient Greek, "if we had not been ruined." Coligny, like William III., and Washington in after times, showed himself stronger than ever after he had suffered a defeat. His authority was not founded upon the enthusiasm which triumphs awaken, but upon the profound feeling that he was indispensable to his party. When he

fell sick on one occasion his value was immediately made plain by the errors which were committed in his absence. Everything yielded before his proud and dispassionate temperament. The discipline and subordination in which he kept his army was admired as a merit of the highest order. He entered into the nature and feelings of the German cavalry, and, as the French said, controlled their rude *bizarrie* with the same firmness which he exercised in dominating the natural liveliness of the French nobles with whom he had to do; over all his influence was as complete as if he had had a right to the chief command. Amongst co-religionists and companions in arms, who were all his equals, he appeared at the same time as a censor and a king. The few intimacies he formed made the deeper impression on account of his habitual reserve, and men boasted of his confidence amongst their friends\*.

His was one of the greatest positions a subject ever occupied in a monarchy; but let us not mistake it, for it was at the same time the most anomalous: a powerful party, armed and proceeding to the accomplishment of their object, resign themselves

\* The Venetian Aluise Contarini compares him with Hannibal, and extols him, "che avendo perso tante battaglie si è conservato sempre in reputazione, massime i Reistri e Lancichenech, i quali se ben erano creditori di molte paghe, e se ben hanno molte volte perse le sue bagaglie e carrette piene di rubbamenti che avean fatti, mai però si sono ammutinati."

without conditions to the guidance of a private nobleman, and by their obedience to his commands and their pecuniary contributions, raise him to a position of almost independent power, acknowledging his authority to call them to arms at any moment. But his connections extended far beyond France. All who were inclined to the Protestant opinions in the territories of the King of Spain had their eyes upon him ; he himself said that not only in the Netherlands, but throughout all the Spanish provinces, it required but a little of his powder to set them in a blaze. The German princes, who dreaded, as they said themselves, the effects of this European conflagration so near their own walls, regarded him as their champion ; the troops which served under him bore his name in Eastern Germany. With all this there is no trace that he ever desired to render his position subservient to any personal object ; he was ambitious, but his ambition was of a religious and patriotic character.

No one felt more deeply than he how important it was to put an end to this intestine war, with all its horrors,—horrors which he, as a chief leader, witnessed and deplored, but had not the power to prevent. He was fortunate in being again on good terms with the King, for all these connections were to be employed for the advantage of the Crown, of the kingdom, and of religion.

France had now dropped the alliance with Spain,

and showed an inclination towards England. It was the Admiral's brother, Cardinal Chatillon, who suggested a marriage between Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou. Judging from the earnestness with which the negotiations concerning the religious stipulation were conducted, we should conclude that there was something more than mere appearances in these proposals. The negotiations finally failed on account of the French prince demanding freedom for the exercise of the Catholic religion, which was incompatible with the laws recently enacted in England. The plan was not allowed to fall altogether to the ground however; his youngest brother, the Duke of Alençon, was ready to submit to any conditions for the hand of the Queen, and Catharine promised her ambassador a reward such as ambassador never before received if he succeeded in bringing about this marriage. Had it taken place, the design was to reinstate Mary Stuart in Scotland, not under Spanish influence, but under the united influence of England and France.

The jealousy of the two powers against Spain was augmented by the alliance which Philip II. formed with the Venetians and the Pope against the Ottoman Porte, and greatly increased after the great victory gained by the allies at Lepanto. European history will always linger with peculiar interest upon the political aspect and disposition of those times which brought forth an event of such vast signifi-

cancy as the origin of the United Netherlands. The men and the circumstances of the age were calculated to make it possible. Without the common opposition of the English and the French against Spain, the ships of the Prince of Orange would unquestionably have been destroyed ; and when the *Gueux* succeeded in gaining possession of the Brill and Flushing, they could not have maintained these places if the conquest of Mons, which was effected principally by the French Huguenot troops under Count Louis of Nassau, had not compelled the Spaniards to divide their forces.

The state of religious affairs in France opened still greater prospects of another kind. It facilitated the concurrence of the house of Valois with the house of Austria in reference to the Crown of Poland ; it was even rumoured that at the next vacancy of the imperial throne the King of France might be called to it, because he was bound alike to Protestants and Catholics, and showed himself disposed to uphold the principles of the Pacification.

To this it is to be ascribed that a complete understanding and reconciliation took place in France, if not between the two parties, at least between the royal house and the government on the one side, and the Huguenots on the other.

The government of the day was not in the habit of appointing or dismissing ministers, except very occasionally. This alteration in the system was

owing to the circumstance that the men whose opinions corresponded most with those of the supreme power at the time, took possession of the places to which, as members of the council, they had a common right, and the others, whose opinions were different, retired to make room for them.

Thus the sons of the Constable, and the Marshal Francis de Montmorency in particular, were especially powerful in the State. They had concluded the peace, and represented the principle of reconciliation. The proposition of a marriage between Margaret of Valois, the youngest daughter of Catherine, and Prince Henry of Navarre, who was regarded as the head of the Huguenots, came from the Montmorencies\*. Charles IX. agreed to it readily, for it would serve admirably to reconcile the hostile parties, and even the Huguenots themselves, after some hesitation, were not opposed to it. The Prince was firm enough not to allow himself to be drawn into the designs of his mother-in-law; on the contrary, he would be likely to exercise a salutary influence\* upon the King, his future brother-in-law, in favour of religion.

The hopes of a thorough understanding were so strong, that the Admiral, notwithstanding the enmity he had so often experienced, formed the re-

\* So says Margaret herself, Mém. p. 24: "La maison de Montmorency étaient ceux qui en avaient porté les premières paroles."

solution of repairing to the Court in person. In a consultation held upon it at Rochelle, the majority of his friends declared themselves against such a step, as the great leader, upon whom the salvation of the cause depended, should not venture into the midst of their old enemies. The Admiral however insisted upon it : he had had so much success in opposition to the King, that with his favour they must obtain all they desired ; he had often yielded to the opinions of others, he said, and now begged that he might be permitted to follow the dictates of his own judgement. He did so, and when he arrived at the Court was received in the best manner. The Queen showed him every mark of favour and friendship ; King Charles IX. told him he was as welcome as any one who had been at the Court for many years\*, and manifested for him all that admiration which a youth of warlike disposition would be likely to feel for an experienced old warrior.

In fact, Charles IX. felt strongly disposed in favour of the Admiral's views and propositions.

It gave him great pleasure to hold intercourse with military officers, to listen to their experience of war, to learn its rules, and to cherish the hope of performing future actions himself. He believed himself destined to assert by his arms the

\* This was communicated to the English Court by Walsingham, and by the ambassador De la Mothe Fénélon to France ; the King said it was quite true, i. 268.

ancient rights of his predecessors. He regarded Milan as his unquestionable property, and loved to see Italian emigrants around him. He looked upon the proposed marriage of his sister to the Prince of Navarre, as likely to afford him an opportunity of carrying the war beyond the Pyrenees. The refugees from the Netherlands were also received by him, and, amongst others, Louis of Nassau. He held long conversations, which often continued till late at night, with the Admiral, who seemed destined to guide the fortunes of France, and was now esteemed as powerful as the Constable had formerly been at the court of Henry II.

Coligny himself, stimulated by these circumstances, began to form plans of the boldest character. Indirectly to promote the Protestant cause in the Netherlands was no longer sufficient for him : he used all his influence to bring about an open war with Spain. His reasons were these. King Philip II. was destitute of money ; the French forces, after so many actions in the interior of the kingdom, were superior in military exercises to the Spanish; by a foreign expedition the King of France would be able to unite all the domestic factions ; he had only to throw himself with his undivided power upon the Netherlands, and all the provinces would submit to him.

Against such a course there were many objections, and the adverse party did not fail to bring them

forward. They declared that it would manifest the most crying ingratitude if the King were to attack those from whom he had received such important assistance in the last war ; that Philip II. was not so weak as not to be able to re-establish order in his provinces, when he might turn all his power against distracted France ; but admitting even that the King of France were victorious over Philip, even that would be highly dangerous, since the King would in that case be indebted to the Huguenots for his success ; that these would then become stronger and stronger, take the guidance of all affairs, strive to obtain possession of the supreme power in temporal and spiritual things, and perhaps force the subjects of the King who belonged to the ancient religion to rebel against his authority, for if the Catholic people had nothing good to expect from their King, they would attach themselves to the great Catholic nobles. A plan was devised, in accordance with which the Catholic associations were to be united under the several governors of the provinces and one trustworthy chief, as closely as the Huguenots were on their side, in order to inflict upon them some great blow. It was yet possible to destroy them totally ; the King must be compelled to acknowledge that he was in error\*.

\* Discorso sopra gli umori di Francia, di M<sup>r</sup> Nazzaret : 1570  
Bibl. Barb. at Rome.

This consultation indicated the whole difficulty which a nation distracted by two parties must necessarily experience, should it resolve to interfere with foreign concerns: in such a case each party will bestow more attention upon its own interests than upon the common interests of the State. What a vast revolution in affairs would it have caused, had the Huguenots succeeded in identifying the great external interests of the French kingdom with their own special views! The result of their design was however that all the advantages which the enterprise which they furthered promised were not obvious to the zealous Catholics, who saw nothing in it but danger to the Church and to the State.

In July, 1572, the war against Spain appeared inevitable. A body of mercenaries which had been drawn together by the Admiral attempted to penetrate into the Netherlands under Captain Genlis, but were met in the district of Mons, defeated, and dispersed. A letter fell into the hands of the Duke of Alva on this occasion, which proved beyond question the participation of Charles IX. in the expedition\*. In this letter he promised the Count of Nassau to devote all the power which God had given him to the purpose of liberating the Netherlands from the burden that oppressed them.

\* Alva to Zayas: "J'ai en mon pouvoir une lettre du Roi de France, qui vous frapperait de strépeur si vous la voyiez."—July 19, 1572, in Gachard, ii. 269.

Distrustful friends had once more warned the Admiral, reminding him of the hostility of some members of the royal house as well as of the council, and of the old threats which had issued from Bayonne ; but it is easy to conceive that such suggestions made no impression upon him. He knew well that he had enemies, and dreaded the hostility of the Duke of Anjou even more than that of the Queen, but he hoped to win his favour by meritorious services. The King, he said, was bound by his connections with the Netherlands, with England, and with some of the German princes ; God had inclined his heart, and in his disposition there was room for praise only. He had sent a fleet into the neighbourhood of Rochelle, but it was an unworthy suspicion to imagine that it was intended to act against that town ; it was destined to intercept the Spanish fleet, to conquer it, and then bear up for Flushing. In these maritime prospects, Coligny acted for the most part in accordance with the title which he bore. It was an old thought of his to found Protestant colonies in America. His first attempt had failed through the incompetency of the person to whom the enterprise was entrusted ; to the second, which was sent to Florida, the Spaniards, out of national and religious jealousy, had put a frightful termination. But in the year 1571 Coligny sent out a sea-captain named Minguetière, with orders to explore the territories in South Amer-

rica, and to bring back correct information respecting that continent\*.

He had formed the idea of separating the Netherlands from Spain, and at the same time assailing the power of King Philip in the Indies, to place himself at the head of the powers which would then have the maritime superiority in the southern world, and thus obtain for his nation and his faith a share in the dominion of the other hemisphere. He was so occupied with these speculations that he despised all warnings, which, for the most part, were founded upon the observation of trifling circumstances only. He appears to have felt that the suspicions which led the Huguenots to take up arms in the year 1567 were unfounded, and he was unwilling to disturb himself, or to allow his old age to be troubled by a repetition of similar errors. Rather would he die than spend the remainder of his days in continual apprehension of a power which was now once more above him. Compared with the great plan which he had conceived, life itself had no value for him unless it could be devoted to its execution. There was apparently every prospect of its success.

The miscarriage of the expedition under Genlis, the cruel treatment of the prisoners, and certain offensive expressions of Alva's, which, as the King

\* "Pour bien remarquer les lieux... dresser une parfaite représentation de tous ces quartiers."—Popelinière, ii. lib. 25, p. 21.

said, amounted almost to putting him on his trial, caused a general agitation in Paris; all was in favour of the war, and the King himself seemed to desire it. The Venetian ambassador, who had been sent to France by his Signoria, in order to prevent the outbreak of a war between that country and Spain, which would have rendered all further undertakings against the Ottoman Porte impossible, asserts that the war then appeared inevitable; that orders were issued every hour for raising and arming troops, and that a multitude of officers, both cavalry and infantry, had offered their services to the King\*.

There was still one question to be decided—What would Queen Catharine de' Medici, who had hitherto given the deciding impulse to all the transactions of the kingdom, say to this undertaking?

Let us endeavour to recall her position and her qualities at this the most important moment of her life.

The house of Medici, at Florence, to which Catharine belonged, had distinguished itself in the fif-

\* Juan Micheli, 1572: "Successo non solo molestissimo all'Amiraglio, ma a tutta la Francia, trovandovisi un gran numero di gentilhuomini e di persone di rispetto. . . La guerra per quattro o sei giorni continui fu tenuta per ferma, et se ne parlava publicamente come di cosa accordata. E già si erano fatte, et si facevano tutte l'ore, spedizioni di cavalleria et fanteria." That the defeat of Genlis should have discouraged the French is not to be thought of.

teenth century by high cultivation, superiority of intellect, and a successful policy, which preserved peace in Italy; in the sixteenth it contended with all the resources of power for the maintenance of its disputed sovereignty. This conflict gave occasion for Machiavelli's book, entitled 'The Prince': it was written for Catharine's father, Lorenzo de' Medici. Next appeared those sprung from another line, Cosmo, the founder of the Grand Duchy, of whom the emigrants said, that as in former times justice and honour were prized in their beautiful Tyrrhenian land, so now he appeared to be most highly valued who was most deeply stained with blood, and had made the greatest number of widows and orphans. Cosmo maintained his authority by severity, guile, and vengeance.

Catharine's earliest recollections carried her back, not to days of infancy such as most other princesses remembered, when they grew up in peace amidst the most watchful attentions and cares, but to scenes of the fiercest religious and political animosity. As a fatherless and motherless orphan, she was placed in the convent Delle Murate, at Florence, but the nuns took part for and against her\*, so that it was found necessary to remove her from the convent; she left it weeping violently, for she feared she was about to be put to death.

\* Varchi, 'Storia Fiorentina,' xi. 374: "Si cominciò prima a bisbigliare e poi a romoreggiare."

When she grew up, her worldly-wise uncle, Clement VII., contrived to bring about a marriage between her and the second son of King Francis I. The King, in consenting to the match, was moved chiefly by the fear that, if it did not take place, she would be given in marriage to the Duke of Milan, and that France would be thus more completely excluded from Italy\*.

On the other hand, on the occasion of this marriage, the view of erecting a great Italian principality founded on both the French and Medicean claims, was more definitely maintained. Urbino, Modena, Pisa, and, if possible, Milan and Genoa, were to belong to it. This was a plan however the execution of which could never have been possible. Catharine was not to spend her life as an Italian, but as a French princess: here her intellect and her destiny led her on from step to step in a continual ascent to power. At first the elder brother of her husband stood in the way, but his death, which plunged the country and her husband in deep sorrow, opened to her the immediate prospect of a throne.

Her friends however reproached her all the more that she remained childless for a long period. We have mentioned how at one time she was in danger of being repudiated by her husband; but her ready

\* Loaysa to Charles V., June 9, 1531: "Es grande el temor que tiene (el Rey de Francia) que el Papa case su sobrina con el Duque de Milan."

ness to suffer all that might fall upon her,—either to retire to a convent, or to remain at court, in order to wait upon the more fortunate wife who should succeed her,—disarmed all antipathy.

At length she had children, and as the consort of a king and the mother of future kings she took a high position ; but even this was not accomplished without difficulty. The Duchess of Valentinois, no longer probably a rival of Catharine in the peculiar sense of the word, still exercised an indescribable influence upon her husband. Catharine was compelled to show a resignation to this state of things, which she was far from feeling, in order now and then to obtain some slight satisfaction for her ambition. Excluded from all affairs she appeared to live only for her husband, her attendants, and a few personal favourites. She was not wanting meanwhile in the almost hereditary predilection which distinguished her family for art and splendour. The income appointed her, which was not by any means insignificant, was never sufficient for her liberalities\* : she thought she did something peculiarly French, when she kept the court as magnificent as it had been in the time of Francis I. ; she made it

\* Lorenzo Contarini, Relatione, 1550: “E donna più giovane del Re 13 giorni solamente, non bella, ma savia...amata da ognuno e dal Re particolarmente per il suo ingegno e bontà, e quanto alle cose ordinarie assai ben trattata ; ha 200 m. sc. da spendere ogni anno, se ben non le bastano, perchè è liberalissima, ha gran corte di uomini e di donne.”

her occupation and showed a special talent for it. For processions, dances, and plays she possessed a naturally inventive faculty, and was the soul of every festivity ; after the fashion of the time she also took part in the manly recreations ; she was esteemed amiable, ingenuous, and affable, and those who listened to her discourse were pleased and instructed. She said in after times that nothing lay then upon her heart but the love of her husband, and that her sole anxiety was that she was not beloved by him as she desired\* ; when he was absent from the Court during the campaigns she wore mourning.

She asserted that she possessed that inexplicable quality of a common family consciousness, the existence of which has been constantly denied, and which is yet perpetually pretended to, by which things and events removed both in place and time appear as if present, and that she was made aware beforehand, either by an apparition or a dream, of every misfortune which befell any member of her family ; she even stated that she had had a presentiment of the fatal accident which deprived her of her husband in the tournament already mentioned. She would never afterwards enter the place where

\* Letter to Elizabeth of Spain : " Vous m'aves veue si contente comme vous, ne pensant jeamès avoyer autre trisbulatyon que de n'estre asses aymaye à mon gré du Roy vostre père, qui m'onoret plus que je ne mérites ; mès je l'aymai tant que je aves toujours peur, come vous saves." — Paris, Négociations sous François II.

it was held, and her carriage took a round whenever it was necessary to pass that way.

Under the government of her eldest son, which followed that of her husband, she took some share in the transaction of state affairs, especially in authorizing the public decrees with her signature. A thorough influence over them she could not attain, in consequence of the ascendancy of the Guises, which she was compelled to endure; Mary Stuart also took precedence of her; yet such was the state of things at that time that she had it in her power, and sometimes ventured, to mitigate in some measure the prevailing severity.

With the accession of her second son to the throne the time at length arrived when she could perform a political part, and when she believed it necessary to take it upon herself.

The personal and dynastic character she exhibited under these circumstances was peculiar. She accounted it a crime on the part of the Guises that they should have formed the design, immediately after the death of Francis II., of marrying Mary Stuart to Don Carlos of Spain, because she had destined her youngest daughter for that Prince; she looked upon it as intolerable that subjects should presume to enter into rivalry with the house of France.

When she looked round her however in the confusion of parties she could discover no other reliable support: as she said in one of her letters, God had

taken away her husband and her eldest son, and she was left with three little boys in a kingdom full of divisions, where she did not know one man in whom she could place confidence, but where all sought their own interests with passionate selfishness. "I will however strive," she adds, "to maintain my power for the preservation of my children."

In her earlier years a predilection for the Protestant religion was ascribed to her, and it is possible she may have had her fits of ecclesiastical heterodoxy like other Court ladies of the time; but a real earnest inclination to Calvinism was not to be looked for in a gay Italian princess, who enjoyed life keenly, and whose antecedents connected her so closely with the Papacy. She was always of opinion that Catholicism must be the religion of Kings and States; she was not on this account however devoted to the severest doctrines of Catholicism; her experience of the world, and even her connection with the Papal See, taught her to see in religion not religion merely.

Her principal object was to sustain the sovereign power which belonged to her sons, and the administration of which devolved chiefly upon herself, although a stranger, and with but a dubious right to such a position.

According to the general fashion of the age she was disposed to search, in reference to public events and circumstances, for the mysterious and marvellous

agencies that were believed to co-operate in their production. On one of the towers of her castle at Blois, a pavilion is pointed out which was used by her astrologer for his observations and calculations, for she was as much attached to the science of the stars as her uncle Clement VII. She has been charged with atheism, of which a sort of school was then founded at the French Court by another Florentine, Pietro Strozzi, who was her relative. It may have been such an atheism as characterized the Italian philosophy of the age, which revived the doubts of antiquity respecting the immortality of the soul, but which, on the other hand, attributed unbounded power to the heavenly intelligences, and to the influence of demons. Amulets are also exhibited, which are said to have been worn by Catharine de' Medici, and to be composed of human blood, the blood of beasts, and of all kinds of metals, inscribed with the names of demons, and with magic figures; one of her bracelets exhibits a variety of talismanic characters, and among them the name of God. The co-operative powers of Heaven and Earth, which it was sought to discover and to dominate, were to serve to bring forth or restrain the personal fortune of the individual.

Catharine de' Medici was of a large and, at the same time, firm and powerful figure; her countenance had an olive tint, and her prominent eyes and curled lip reminded the spectator of her great

uncle Leo X. Continuous and even violent exercise was absolutely necessary to her; she rode to the chase by the side of the men, and having boldly followed the game on horseback, through brakes and thickets, over stocks and stones, she gave herself up without reserve to the pleasures of the table. At the same time however she was indefatigably occupied in her own personal affairs, such as her buildings, of which she had always four or five in hand, and the training and education of her children, and more especially with the general affairs of the state, both domestic and foreign. She may be said to have possessed power, but she was very far from being in a position to use it as she thought proper. She found herself in the condition of a person who, having been raised to power by the force of circumstances, and seeing his authority every instant in danger, is compelled to devote every energy to its maintenance. It was not with personal interests merely she had to contend, but with the strong opposition of general opinion, the strength of which however came back to the side of those in authority. She favoured the weaker party so long as it suited her purpose, yet not without foresight\*; she placed it in opposition to one that was growing too strong and independent, but she

\* Sigismondo di Cavalli: "La Regina, per conservarsi sola in sede molto tempo, andò schernendo con favori et inalzare or l' una or l' altra parte, secondo che a lei pareva necessario dar contrapeso a quella che più pareva di spingersi innanti."

did not commit herself completely to its views; in short she wished to make use of both, in order that she might govern, but did not wish to be governed by them. No one trusted her, and she confided in no one. Many a man, says a Venetian, might well have forgotten the art of fencing if placed in her position, where friends and enemies were no longer distinguishable from one another,—where she was obliged to ask counsel of persons whom, at the time, she was well aware were concealing their real opinions from her. In her own chamber she was transported with anger and grief; when the hour of audience arrived, she dried her tears and appeared with a pleasant countenance. Her maxim was to cause every one to depart from her presence contented; but whilst she appeared to give a definite answer, it was immediately observed that she had not pronounced her final decision, and whilst this was expected the conversation was suddenly changed to some other topic. She never lost sight of the opposition by which she was checked and limited. Many of her written instructions still remain, referring to foreign affairs, which had however the closest connection with those of the interior of the kingdom; they exhibit a strong conception of the general aspect of things, subtlety of comprehension, and a singular energy of expression, and possess a peculiar *naïveté* in the recommendation of secret means and courses.

Catharine threw into the contest, in which the history of the world was to receive a new aspect, all that fearful presence of mind and inexhaustible versatility of a female intellect, which sees its own interests alone in all it contemplates. Her ambition passed for maternal duty and solicitude. Her pride was simply self-defence. She said that if she had not constantly borne the burden of government upon her head, she would still have ever drawn it behind her ; the meaning of which seems to be, that she would never have allowed it to go altogether out of her hands. The attainment of this object occupied all her attention ; she had none to bestow upon the means by which it was obtained. In the opinions which were taught, she saw neither their import nor their value ; she looked merely at the political principles with which they were associated. Moral precepts she did not respect, but she found no pleasure in vice. Human life had no value in her eyes. She professed Italian morality—the morality of her house—which looked upon all means as lawful by which power was attained or preserved.

After the peace of 1570 general efforts were made to bring about a reconciliation ; Catharine was not only not opposed to them, but, on the contrary, saw with satisfaction that her younger children associated themselves with the various parties : her second son, the Duke of Anjou, made common cause with the Guises ; the third, the Duke of

Alençon, joined the Montmorencies; her eldest daughter was married to a member of the house of Lorraine, and the youngest she gave to the youthful Bourbon, the head of the Huguenots. And upon these connections she founded the most extensive projects. Her children felt from time to time that they were made subservient to a purpose; they were disunited amongst themselves, and did not love their mother, but yet they were always ruled by her.

A man now rose to great authority in the midst of the universal fluctuation of parties,—one who was zealously attached to his religious views, and who undertook to bring the policy of France into concurrence and co-operation with the opinions he had embraced, by leading that kingdom to an open war with Spain.

Catharine, who had become Queen of France in opposition to Spain, could not be much disposed to favour Spanish interests; but an open war with this power, whose resources she estimated as immense, and which represented a principle, which though she did not adopt she was unwilling to frustrate, did not lie within the range of her policy\*. Besides, she could not be expected to consent to an

\* Aluise Contarini, Marzo, 1572: "Per molti inditti si vede che la mente della Regina Madre non è di lasciar romper l' amicitia colla Spagna, per i pericoli e danni che potria correr la Francia delle armi di Spagnoli, abbondanti di danari, copiosi d'amici, gagliardi di forze, uniti, accorti."

enterprise which would have been decided by an influence not only independent of her, but actually opposed to her. The mutual confidence between her son and the Admiral had been for some time highly distasteful to her; she complained that the King saw the Admiral too frequently and herself too little. Should Coligny's wishes influence the King, and should his designs succeed, he would in that case become as intolerable to her as ever Francis Duke of Guise had been.

The Queen was on a visit to her daughter of Lorraine, at the time when the outbreak in Paris threatened to lead to a war, and hastened to the capital, determined to put an end to the warlike movement, whatever it should cost her.

Charles IX., upon her representation, founded on experience, consented immediately that before the affair proceeded further it should be once more discussed in Council.

Coligny objected to such a step, stating that the Council consisted for the most part of men whose temperament and position in life made peace appear desirable to them, and that it could answer no purpose to dispute with persons who were not open to conviction. The King promised that he would summon to the Council men experienced in war, such as the Dukes of Montpensier and Nevers and the Marshal de Cossé, against whom nothing could be objected.

Under these circumstances the project of war came to a fresh deliberation. The Admiral delivered his opinions with warmth and eloquence, hoping to draw those who were hesitating to his side, by the force of his reasons. In this assembly however the feelings of the members were not favourable to him. The King's mother and his brother, the Duke of Anjou, were decidedly against the Admiral, and finally the King himself agreed with them, so that Coligny's proposal was unanimously rejected. He was not disposed however to rest satisfied with this decision. He had himself promised assistance to the Prince of Orange, and now observed, that the King would, it was to be hoped, have no objection to his rendering such assistance by means of his friends and perhaps in his own person. This disclosure was received with astonishment ; one word followed another, and a warm dispute arose. "Madame," said Coligny at last, "the King now withdraws from a war which promises him advantages ; God forbid that another should break out, from which he may not be able to withdraw." Although these words were intended to allude to the war in Flanders, which in one way or other must have implicated France, yet the Queen took them as a threat, as if the Admiral had determined to excite new troubles and to kindle once more the flames of civil war.

She was an Italian—she had not yet settled

her account with Coligny. Had he not on one occasion opposed her regency? Had he not on another attempted by a sudden surprise to get the whole Court and even herself into his power? She asserted that one of her most trustworthy confidants and retainers had been destroyed by the contrivances of the Admiral. She had entertained the design of taking vengeance upon him as early as the year 1568, but he was too strong, and had compelled her to consent to peace, and now he wished to force her into his political views. The Admiral, whom the regular income arising from the contributions of the Huguenots provided with considerable pecuniary resources, possessed moreover, through their unconditional attachment to his person, a power which was almost independent; it was said of him that he could raise a better army in four days than the King could in four months. He was not merely hated by the Queen, but while he lived she was in danger; she resolved to get rid of him.

The period had arrived when the marriage between her daughter and Henry of Navarre, by which the parties were to be reconciled, was to be solemnized. The Huguenots had assembled in great numbers to witness the ceremony. How different were the designs and projects by which the festivities were interrupted!

The Admiral had attended the Council which

was held in the Louvre on Friday, the 22nd of August, and was returning to his residence, when just as he was passing by a house belonging to an adherent of the Guises, a shot was fired at him: he was indebted for his life to an accidental movement which he made at the moment, but the bullet struck him in the hand and arm.

Every one attributed the deed to the vengeance of the Guises, and the King threatened them with punishment for it. Cautious observers however rejected that explanation from the first, for it was said, how could the Guises venture, in the very precincts of the Court, to give free course to their revenge? Meanwhile the suspicion contained a portion of both truth and error. The Papal nuncio gives the following account of the matter.

When the Queen had finally decided upon a course hostile to the Admiral, she immediately took into her counsels the widow of Francis Duke of Guise. This lady was, like herself, an Italian, and had already repeatedly, though always in vain, prayed for vengeance for the death of her husband. The Queen now assented to her desire; the two bound themselves together to procure the destruction of the Admiral, and took their sons, the one the Duke of Anjou and the other the Duke of Guise, into their confidence. The most extravagant plans were proposed. Young Guise was of opinion that his mother should with her own hand

shoot the Admiral when in the Court circle he should be among the Queen's ladies\*, for in those times ladies learned the use of fire-arms in the chase. This proposal was however rejected, and the murderous enterprise entrusted to a person upon whom they could rely, who had concealed himself in that house and waited till the Admiral should be riding by.

The majority of those who were near the event, have asserted that if the Admiral had been killed on this occasion, the Queen would have been satisfied with the one victim ; but he had escaped, and was now for the first time in a position to become truly formidable.

The Huguenots crowded round him with redoubled zeal, and demanded justice : their requisitions sounded like threats proceeding from a confident knowledge of their power. The general suspicion soon fixed upon the most important and real originator of the deed. Certain expressions came to her ears one evening at supper ; they were probably exaggerated, but at any rate they gave her grounds for apprehension on her own account. The consideration of the personal and general danger incurred by the deed already perpetrated, excited her still further to the designs of blood and vio-

\* Salviati, August 24, 1512 : " Madama di Nemours fu da M'sgnr. di Guise suo figlio stimulata a tirare l' archibusata mentre l' Amiraglio fusse con la Regente."

lence which had lain latent in her mind. The Huguenots were in her hands—it was only necessary for her to will it, and they were all destroyed.

It has always been the general opinion that Catharine de' Medici had for years been preparing everything for this catastrophe; that all her apparent favours to the Huguenots, all her treaties and conclusions of peace, were simply so many guileful pretexts in order to win their confidence, that she might then deliver them over to destruction.

Against this supposition however it was observed long ago, that a stratagem laid so long beforehand was contrary to the nature of French modes of proceeding, and is in itself nearly impossible\*. We have ourselves seen, as we have proceeded, many circumstances which render it extremely improbable. The notion which some have maintained that the King of Spain and the Duke of Alva were informed beforehand of the design to massacre the Huguenots, and had approved of it, must be rejected without hesitation. We find, so far from this, that the Spaniards were just then in full expectation of the outbreak of the war. The Cardinal of Lorraine had even sent a special courier of his own to warn the Duke of Alva of the hostility of the French

\* Cavalli advances these good reasons: "Se prima dell' archibugiata vi fusse stato questo pensiere di distruggerli (Ugonotti), così facilmente si poteva far come seguì da poi senza poner in dubbio, che per la ferita buona parte se ne andassero." —Relazione di 1574.

Court. The Queen herself was also in earnest, as her letters prove, in the affair of the English marriage, which had been suggested by the most moderate party in the Council: her dynastic and maternal interests were involved in it, and these could not be simulated. Besides, the marriage between her daughter and the King of Navarre, which is regarded as the last step in the whole proceeding, was proposed, not by the Queen, but, as we have already noticed, by the peaceful Montmorency.

Do they take the right view of the affair, we may inquire finally, who attribute the whole to a momentary fit of rage on the part of the Queen, or to a sudden burst of vengeance amongst the mob of Paris? Against this view there are certain historical events which cannot be explained away, and which render its adoption impossible.

It is not altogether without its significance that the Queen had always declared she would revenge herself upon the Huguenots. She mentioned in confidence the example of Queen Blanche, who had subdued at the same time both the rebels and the heretics, and revived the authority of her son: she had read an old chronicle in which this was recorded, and on one occasion told the Venetian ambassador that she did not wish the Huguenots to know that she was acquainted with this history. Although she had not first proposed the marriage of her daughter with Navarre, yet she had zealously promoted it,

and insisted that it should take place in Paris. In reference to the intent of this, hints were given to the Papal legate and to the Papal nuncio, which were of unequivocal significance. The Legate, the Cardinal of Alessandria, who had been sent to France for the purpose of obstructing the marriage and proposing a different one, frequently complains, in his despatches, of the small progress he has the opportunity of making; at last however he announces, unexpectedly, that he has received an answer not unfavourable\*; he does not communicate the nature of this answer in so many words, but the man who then accompanied this Cardinal as auditor, and who afterwards himself occupied the Papal chair, Clement VIII., has recounted, that the King said he thought of nothing but how to revenge himself upon his enemies, and that he had no other means of doing so than what this plot afforded†. The nuncio Salviati likewise asserts that the King told him at Blois, that he had favoured the idea of this marriage merely for the purpose of freeing himself from his enemies‡. It must not be forgotten, neither, that at one time amongst the Italian re-

\* "Lettere e Negotiati del Sr. Cl. Alessandrino," in the Corsini Library at Rome. Letter to Rusticucci, March 6, 1572: "Con alcuni particolari che io porto, de' quali ragguaglierò n. Sme. a bocca, posso dire di non partirmi affatto mal expedito."

† The letter of Ossat of September 22, 1599, cited by all against Lingard. Lettres d'Ossat, lib. v. no. 26.

‡ Salviati, in Mackintosh's History of England, iii. 336, app.

publics marriage festivities had been made subservient to great party massacres. What then is true and what is false? Was there a great deed of violence contemplated long beforehand, and preparations made for its execution? Or were the negotiations concerning the English match, which had been carried on with the greatest vigour, and the at least indirect hostility against Spain, during the summer, meant in earnest? The question would never be decided, if we had to do with a person of a simple, straight-forward mind, in which contradictory plans of necessity exclude each other; but there are characters with whom this is not the case, persons with whom it is a natural necessity to have two strings to their bow, that if one break they may have another in reserve,—in whom there is a native duplicity, which enables them to contemplate opposite courses at one and the same moment. Whilst Catharine pursued zealously the plan which corresponded with the course of her desires and interests, she cherished, in the depths of her soul, the feeling that the measures she took to accomplish that plan might also be made subservient to another purpose. A reconciliation with the Huguenots was not distasteful to her, since by means of it she would acquire a loftier and more brilliant position in Europe; but at the same time she saw them streaming into Paris with a secret pleasure when she thought of their coming into the midst of a popu-

lace which required merely that the reins should be slackened in order to destroy them. Were they to go further than she contemplated or desired, or any other event occur, she had in her hands an infallible resource. Since Condé's residence in the capital, the Parisian populace were filled with rage against the Huguenots; they would not suffer any of that way of thinking within their walls; even during the negotiations of peace they threatened with death and destruction those of their opponents who had come into the city on that occasion. The authority of the Court and its expressed will were necessary to control the people, and for this purpose it was that the civic militia was organized. The confidence alone of Coligny in the greatness and future success of his cause, which he believed destined to the conquest of the earth, makes it conceivable, how he could have ventured in the midst of this hostile agitated, and easily roused mob, which endured his presence and that of his followers only with suppressed fury. All who observed the antipathy between the elements that now came into contact, foreboded evil consequences. The preachers in Geneva and the Cardinals at Rome foresaw and predicted a catastrophe. The Admiral Coligny reposed an unlimited confidence in the word of the young King. After he had been wounded, the Huguenots consulted whether they ought not to leave the city armed as they were, and, notwith-

standing his condition, carry him away with them ; young Téligny, his son-in-law, however assured the others that he knew the King to the very depths of his heart, that he was certain he was to be relied on, and that there was no ground for apprehension\*.

And no wonder that Charles IX. should appear to be sincere, for he was so in reality. All that had been comprehended by him, in his mercurial way, of what was passing, had entirely escaped him in the martial effervescence of the last few days.

Catharine was different. That she had from the beginning a design against the Admiral, connected with the invitation to the nuptials, is in the highest degree probable, yet the design was contemplated rather as a possibility, and expressed rather as a justification. She allowed Coligny to proceed on his course until he became intolerable to her, and then caused him to be shot at. This act brought matters to a state in which they could not possibly remain. Several Italians took a principal part in Catharine's counsels. Birago, a native of Milan, and now Keeper of the Great Seal, who constantly condemned the hesitation which was felt, and advised that the suspected leaders should be secured, Lodovico Gonzaga, Duke of Nevers, Albert Gondi, Duke of

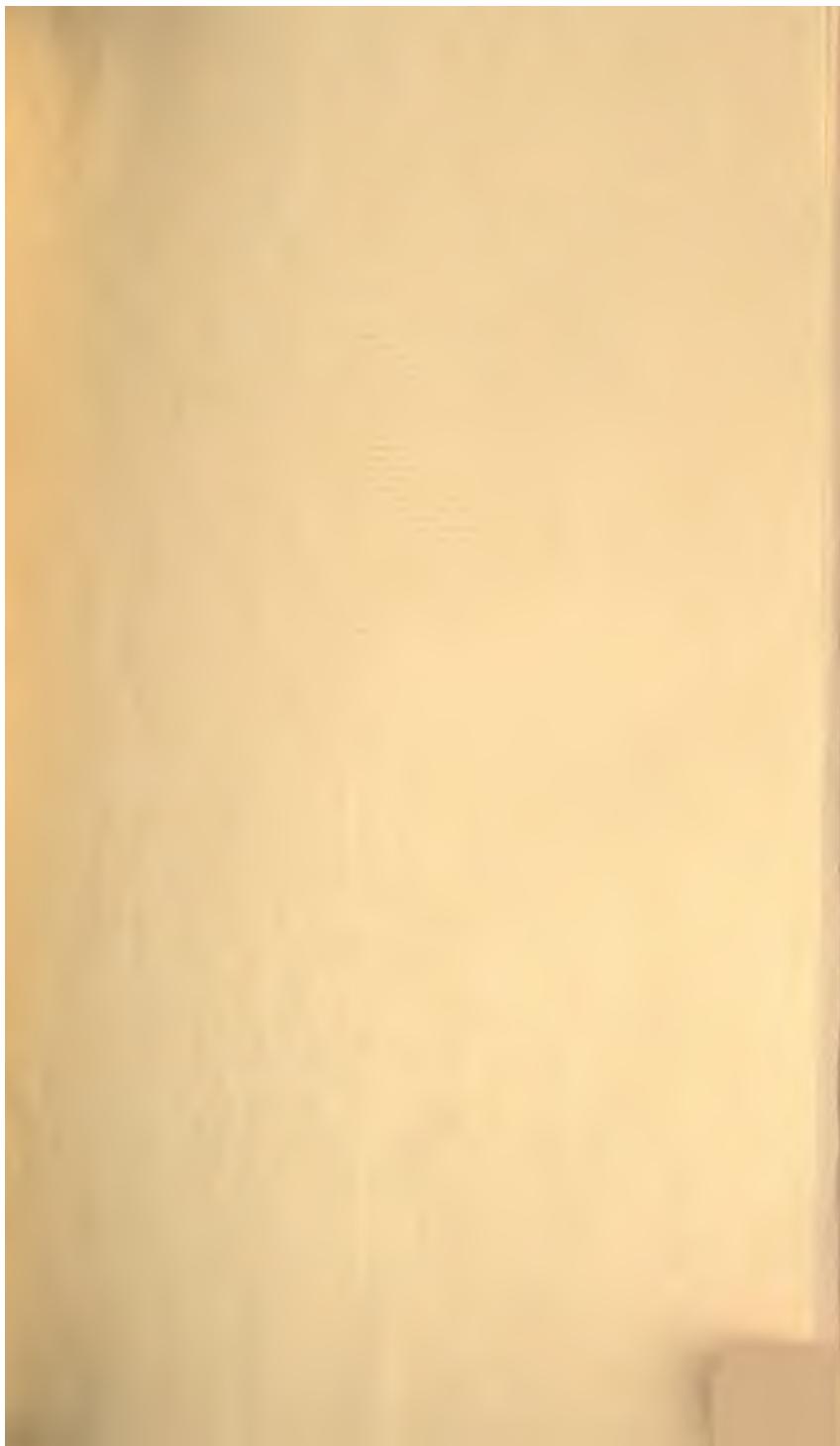
\* "Que c'estoit faire injure au Roi, de révoquer en doute sa parole et sincérité." The earliest biography of Coligny is a valuable authority for what took place among the Huguenots, as it is from the notes of an eye-witness.

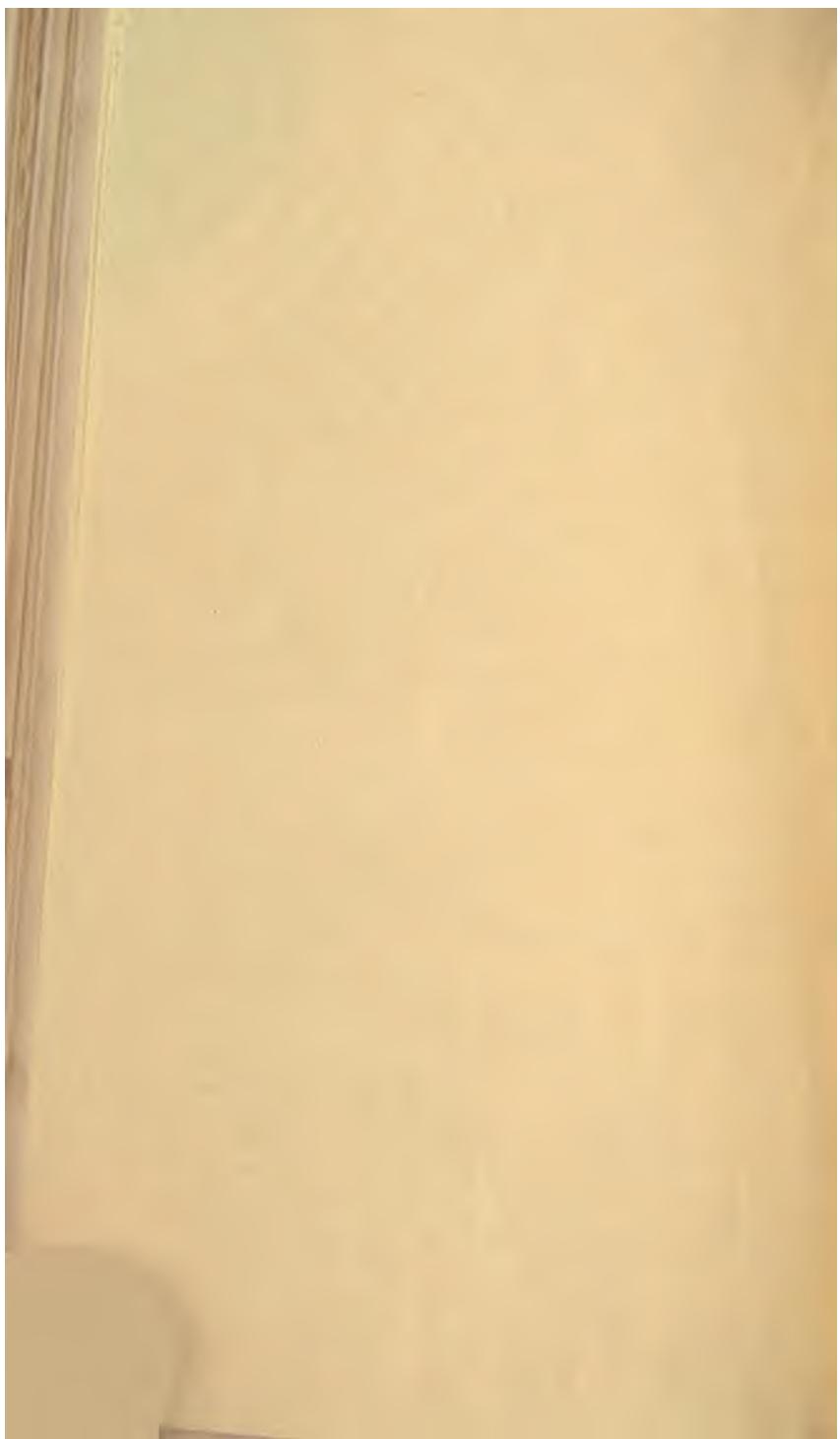
tharine exercised over her son, she had on this occasion to encounter some resistance on his part. The proposal appeared to him horrible. She answered him with an Italian proverb, "Mildness is sometimes cruelty, and cruelty mildness." He feared the evil impression it would make upon mankind generally, but he was answered that the enmity of the two parties, and the name of the Guises, would carry all the blame. He could not resolve upon sacrificing friends with whom he was on terms of the most confidential intercourse, such as Coligny and La Rochefoucauld, who had spent this very evening with him in pleasant jesting and conversation. Catharine however insisted, and it went so far that his mother and brother threatened to leave the Court, since they could not induce him to take precautions against the ruin with which he was threatened, and which might be so easily averted; finally, she reproached him with want of courage\*, which put an end to all his reluctance, and Charles IX. yielded, nay adopted the proposed

\* Sigismondo Cavalli, Relatione di 1574 : "Stette più d' un ora e mezza renitente; finalmente, combattuto della madre et del fratello, consentì; e vedendo la Regina, che, se la cosa si fusse differita, niente portava pericolo di scoprirsi, venne a questo per far risolvere il Re di chiedergli licenza di ritrarsi in qualche parte. e così fece Monsr." The report of Micheli has been of more assistance to me than that of Cavalli; it deserves to be printed. I would only observe, that the narrative put into the mouth of the Duke of Anjou appears to me, on many grounds, which will be investigated elsewhere, to be spurious, and to have been derived from another source.

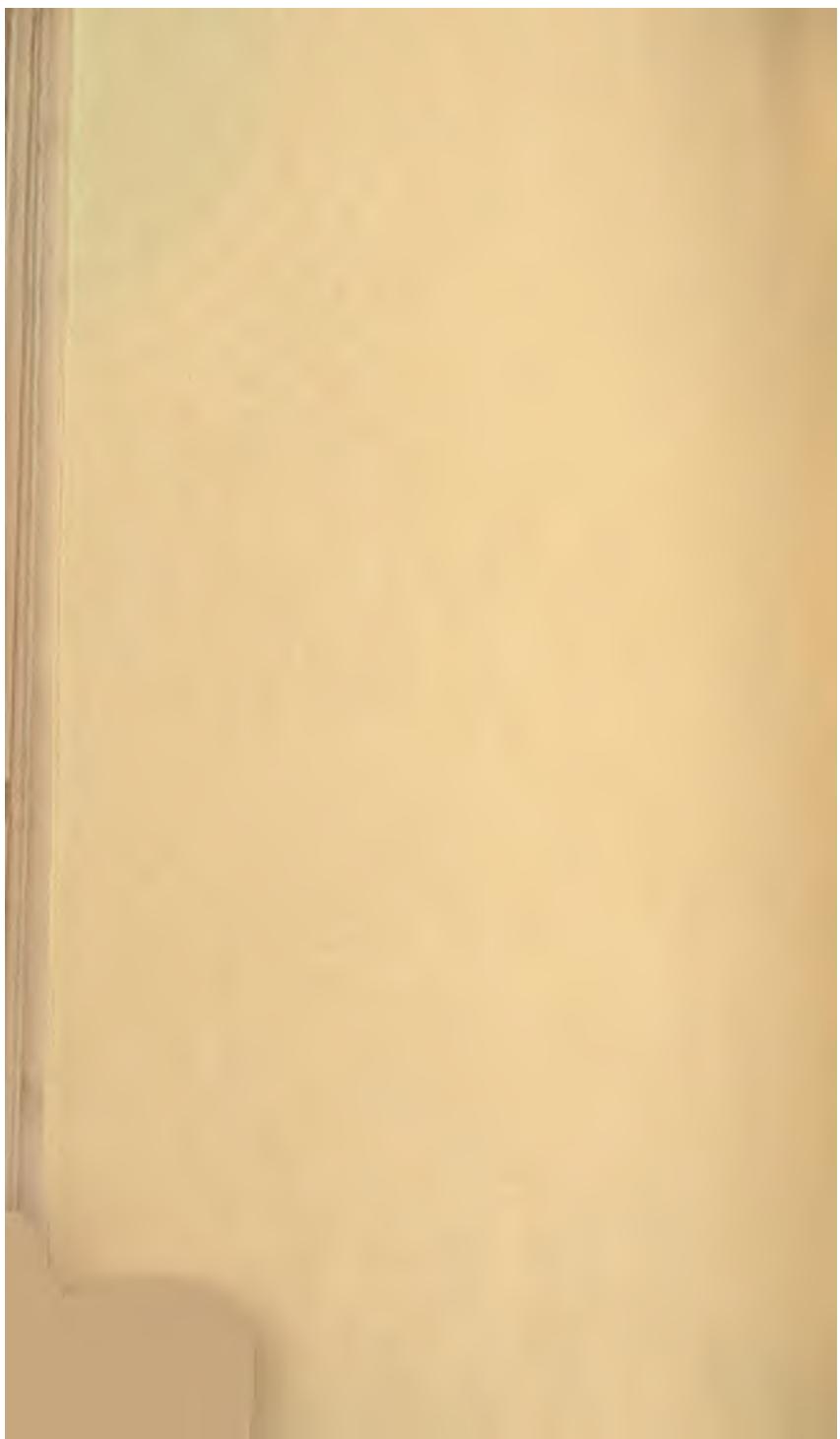












In the day of the massacre. Messengers were sent into the city to ascertain whether any new tumult had broken out, but the answer returned was that all was quiet in the city, and that the commotion was in the air. Henry could never recall this incident without a horror that made his hair stand on end.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### TRANSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT FROM CHARLES IX. TO HENRY III.

IT sounds incredible, and yet it is quite true, that even after the events of the bloody wedding Queen Catharine professed still to sustain the character of a mediatrix, whilst on both sides nothing else was thought or could be thought of the whole occurrence than that the French Court had joined the irreconcileable reactionary party in their efforts against Protestantism. The Queen avoided receiving the Papal legate, who just then arrived; and when his entrance could no longer be deferred, she left Paris, in company with her son, in order not to witness it.

The Duke of Alva spoke to his friends of the whole transaction as it had occurred with strong disapproval, for the informal violence to which the fanaticism of the mob had been excited was in direct contradiction to his habits of thought and disposition. He expected from it however,—espe-

cially now that the most formidable enemies of his King were removed, that the policy of the French Court might be brought to concur with that of Spain. King Philip felt himself moved by the event, which was totally unexpected by him, to an approximation with France, and caused to be made to the French Court an offer of his assistance towards the complete extermination of the Huguenots. The Court however answered him with pompously sounding, and, under the circumstances, memorable words, that “a King of France needed no allies but his own people.”

The fearful deed had come almost unexpectedly upon the very person who perpetrated it—the Queen. She was not prepared for an alteration of her policy; she was firmly determined to raise her son, the Duke of Anjou, to the throne of Poland; she also hoped that either he or the Duke of Alençon might be called to the office of Protector of the Netherlands, and hoped to see him married to the Queen of England. She thought, under the impression of the universal terror, to put an end to the domestic commotions, by a declaration she made, to the intent that, although she had forbidden meetings and preachings, she did not wish to lay any restraint upon individual liberty of conscience. That that was the arrangement to which Catholicism had submitted in England.

The English ambassador told her that the only

difference between the two cases was, that his sovereign had not bound herself to the contrary. To this it must be added, that no one trusted in these new promises of Catharine's.

There were some amongst the Huguenots who were inclined to make their peace, and held it to be almost a duty, since the King their master was now a man, and directed the government himself; and many, under the influence of the terror that overspread France, reconciled themselves to the Mass. The greater part however were of opinion that no guarantee of any kind deserved their confidence ; of two evils, said they, the lesser was manifestly to be chosen, and that consisted in the continuance of hostilities : in distrust alone was their safety : how much more wretched was it to be slaughtered by hired murderers than to fall in a struggle which was justified in the sight of God and man ; for they were not contending against their King, but against criminals who gave loose to their fury under the shelter of his name. Nismes and Sancerre, following the example of Rochelle, refused to receive royal troops. Fiery preachers, putting all at hazard, inflamed the minds of their hearers, and summoned them to the service of the judgement of God, whose arm was already raised against the guilt-stained authors of the massacre, and exhorted them to destroy the tyranny in the tyrants.

Four royal armies took the field in order to force the towns to submission, the strongest body marching against Rochelle. But here there appeared another kind of reaction arising from what had taken place ; the assailing troops were disunited amongst themselves. Many of the bravest soldiers were seized with horror at the idea of being associated with the men who had murdered the Admiral, or who bore the blame of that deed, and would not serve with them. In the midst of their social enjoyments the remembrance of blood intruded itself : on one occasion the company imagined they saw drops of blood under the dice which young Guise had just thrown upon the gaming-table, and the play was given up in horror. When the English fleet approached, the two princes of the blood who were in the army, Alençon and Henry of Navarre, formed the resolution of escaping to the ships, and fleeing to England. There appeared amongst the troops a party of discontented persons who were, in secret, Protestants. In the camp itself the notion was entertained of demanding justice against the murderers, and even, if necessary, of compelling it by force.

It does not follow from these circumstances however that the attack was not carried on with great earnestness. Many thousands must have fallen in the attempts to storm the fortress ; but the defenders never forgot that they were contending not only

for all spiritual good, but for existence itself. The union of the townspeople with the refugees in the great principle of religion made them invincible. The most desperate assaults were heroically resisted, and the most daring sorties made by the besieged, and the Catholic banners which they took were displayed upon the walls; fortunate accidents were regarded as visible tokens of Divine favour, and proofs that God had heard his people when they cried to him in their deepest distress.

Three causes wrought concurrently in favour of the Huguenots,—the heroism of the defence they made, the divisions amongst the besieging troops, and the moderate tone which had been adopted in the foreign policy of the kingdom. The consequence was, that in July, 1573, they obtained a tolerably favourable edict, by which the free exercise of their religion was guaranteed to those who possessed the highest jurisdiction, and to all others liberty to follow their several occupations in peace. This extended to the three towns of Rochelle, Montauban, and Nismes. Sancerre, which had suffered a siege resembling that of Numantia in ancient times, obtained peace through the mediation of the Polish ambassador, by whom the Duke of Anjou received the invitation to assume the crown of Poland, for the possession of that dignity also rested then upon a position of reconciliation between the two religious parties.

Upon the anniversary of St. Bartholomew's Day the Protestants felt themselves again strong enough to demand, at an assembly which they held in the town of Milhaud, complete freedom for the exercise of their religion.

The disunion of the camp had meanwhile transferred itself to the Court. After the departure of the Duke of Anjou the precedence which he had always possessed was claimed by his brother, the Duke of Alençon, and as it was not granted he commenced an open opposition. He was charged with having joined Henry of Navarre—in allusion to the conspiracy of La Mole and Coconas—in order to expel the Queen from the Court, or even to get her murdered,—that is, the mother by the son. Catharine thought it necessary to place the two princes in close custody, and to send their chief confidants, the Marshals Cossé and Montmorency, to the Bastille.

From what appears in the state documents concerning these transactions, it is impossible to apportion the mass of guilt with accuracy; the impression they make is one of astonishment at the very extraordinary condition of this court, and the disposition of the minds of those who belonged to it. Alençon believed that he was hated by his mother,—that she not only postponed his claims, but wished to destroy him; the King of Navarre was more than once apprehensive that his death had

been determined on. On the other hand, the King and Queen trembled for their own lives at the slightest movement; and much was spoken of wax-figures, and certain superstitious and heathenish ceremonies, by which it was intended to shorten the King's life. Magic and mysterious superstition play a part also in reference to other persons. The Italians, ready for any undertaking, daring and trustworthy, had the chief hand in these matters, such as Cosimo Ruggiero, the tutor of Alençon, who could not be forced to make a confession by all the agony of the torture.

In this hour of confusion the eye involuntarily turns towards Charles IX. In his earlier years he had excited much sympathy; he appeared to be a good-tempered, interesting, and generous youth, and showed a taste for poetry and music. For the purpose of invigorating his weak frame various kinds of physical exercise were thought necessary, and to these he gave himself up almost passionately. A smith's forge was erected for him, and it gave him pleasure to be found there bathed in sweat, while he was at work on a suit of armour. He often rose and took horse at midnight in order to ride to the chase, and thought it the greatest honour if he could excel every one in his bodily exercises. The consequence of this was however that little was done for the education of his intellect, and nothing for the formation of his morals. To reflect on the

affairs of the State, in which nothing could be done without him, or to devote anything like earnest attention to them, was not in his nature\*. His passion, when excited, vented itself in a storm of wild imprecations. His ambition and his imagination had been long occupied with warlike schemes against Spain, with campaigns for the conquest of Milan, under the leading of the Admiral, or for the recovery of Navarre. But the natural vehemence of disposition which he cherished was capable of receiving another direction amidst the passionate impulses of the religious and political parties by which he was surrounded, and then even the friends and companions in whose intercourse he had found pleasure appeared to him as his most dangerous enemies. Thus, after some slight resistance, he allowed himself, in an evil hour, to be seduced to the commission of that deed which has consigned his memory to the hatred and execration of succeeding ages. He himself was never entirely free from its effects; he felt conscious that he was regarded as a man of bad heart, in whom slumbered an indomitable savageness. It was remarked that he never looked any one straight in the face: in his audiences he generally kept his eyes shut, and when he opened them he directed them upwards, and immediately

\* Sigismondo di Cavalli, 1574: "Al Re pareva bella cosa aver chi el governasse, e senza altro fastidio potere attendere ai suoi piaceri."

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did not appear quite certain that they would join with Damville, who did not belong to their creed, but they fully recognized his merit. He was the first man, they said, who aroused men's minds from the torpor into which they had been thrown as by a general paralysis, and remembered that he owed duties to God and the Crown, and at the same time to the mass of the people. Their union with the princes of the blood had, after a long struggle, obtained for them the assurance of peace; their union with the governor of a great province must, now that that edict was revoked, secure for them its re-establishment; for Damville and his whole political party demanded the renewal of the Edict of Pacification as a preliminary condition to any further negotiation. A great portion of the Catholic nobility who had relatives amongst the Huguenots, and had been reproached on that account with not having opposed them earnestly enough, now also joined the governor. The Parliaments held firm by the fundamental maxims of the persecuting religion, and this furnished another motive to the nobility to take the part of the Huguenots, for they hated these lawyers, by whom their rights were limited, and themselves treated with injustice. A preliminary arrangement was made at Milhaud in August, 1574, the Huguenots declaring themselves ready to acknowledge Damville as governor of Languedoc, whilst he on his part pledged himself not to in-

introduce the Catholic service into any town in which they were masters. A council composed of members of both creeds was to assist the governor in his administration\*.

Thus was it attempted in this province to re-establish the Edict of Pacification, which the Government had abolished, and to make it possible for both parties to live together. The arbitrary manner in which it was done they excused by asseverating that a faction composed of foreigners had obtained possession of the supreme power, and was striving with all its authority to annihilate the kingdom, the nobility, the princes of the blood, and with them everything like education and pure morality. It was hoped that when the new king arrived, and learned the real state of affairs, he would confirm all that had been done.

There was some reason to expect this, for when Henry III., without altogether renouncing his Polish kingdom, yet left it with a degree of impatience which looked something like a flight, he sent for Damville, as he was coming from Venice, on his return to France, in order to consult with him concerning measures of pacification. The Marshal met the King in Piedmont, who assured him of his intention to establish peace, and recommended him to return to Languedoc and to wait for what should

\* Vaissette, *Histoire de Languedoc*, v. 322.

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ing the Court, and joining the discontented, all of whose complaints and grievances he adopted. A religious war was no longer spoken of, but a war for the public interests, as in the time of Louis XI.\*; but although the name of the Huguenots was thus put somewhat in the background, the religious element still continued in active operation. Soon after the departure of Alençon from the Court, young Henry of Navarre left it also, and deemed it expedient to return without delay to the Reformed confession. The bond of union between the parties was the promise of the Politicians to labour for the re-establishment of the edict of January, which constituted the great object towards which the wishes of the Reformed were directed.

The dispute however was not to be decided this time either, without the interposition of neighbouring nations, and peoples who were related in their religious views.

England again furnished money, and Germany men. These joined young Condé, who had fled into Germany from Picardy when measures were first taken against Alençon and Navarre. The Palatine John Casimir was once more the leader of these auxiliaries, and with them crossed the French frontiers in December, 1575. The Germans were

\* Giovanni Micheli, 1576 : "Non considerandosi per capo principale il fatto della religione, si è transferito e mutato il nome d'Ugonotti in quello di malcontenti."

not altogether without their own object in these movements ; on the contrary, they contemplated a very important one for their own country. John Casimir obtained from the chiefs of the Huguenots assurances that he should be named administrator of the bishoprics of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, which would have brought these towns and districts once more into union with Germany\*. A considerable army was formed gradually, composed of French and German troops. In March, 1576, Alençon mustered thirty thousand men, who demanded to be led directly to Paris, in order to avenge upon the murderers the horrible deeds of St. Bartholomew's Day.

Henry III. was not altogether unprepared ; he also had German and Swiss mercenaries, besides the French who gathered round him. He was of opinion afterwards that it would have been better had he met and opposed his brother boldly ; that however was not to the taste of his mother or his ministers. The Government, feeling itself to be as yet the weaker party, commenced to negotiate.

The great object was to satisfy Alençon : he was assured of a provision, which was almost inconsistent with the royal authority. Condé also was provided for ; and lastly John Casimir was induced to forego his demands, through the influence, it was said, of the Swiss upon his father. The King undertook to

\* Languet, *Epistolaæ Arcanae*, i. 186.

satisfy his troops as regarded their pay, and the Count Palatine immediately commenced his march homewards.

The investigation of the political grievances was referred to the meeting of the Estates, which was to take place the same year. The religious affairs were also accommodated. The edict of January was not fully conceded to the Protestants. They were excluded from Paris, and from its immediate environs to the distance of two leagues; but in all the rest of the kingdom there was granted to them the free exercise of their religion, capacity for all offices, for the decision of their legal disputes a court of appellative instance in the Parliaments, composed of members of both religions, and several places in Guienne, Auvergne, and Languedoc were given up to them for their security\*.

The Politicians indulged in the boldest expectations. Marshal Damville renewed the proposal for a national council, to which the Protestants were also to send deputies, in order that "through a real reformation of the clergy the wrath of God might be appeased." They believed that after this decision had proceeded from them, they would be able, by means of powerful representatives, to rule both, in the Court and in the provinces. They were strong, but yet not strong enough for this. Their proceedings had produced an extensive effect, but

\* Paix, named "de Monsieur," May 1576, in Popelinière, ii. 399.

one neither so rapid nor so thorough as they expected. The powers which they imagined they had conquered, offered them once more the most obstinate resistance.

Their conduct was intolerable to the King especially. It wounded his feelings of self-esteem that a law should, as it were, be forced upon him by a successful rising of his vassals, aided by foreign troops,—a law which he disapproved of in his heart, for notwithstanding all external vacillation he was a thorough Catholic. Throughout the country also the interests of the corporations and of the provinces, as well as the progressive Catholic restoration, the effect of the Jesuits' preaching and instruction, awakened a spirit of zeal which would hear of no reconciliation. The Parliaments were not disposed to admit into them the Reformed, in other chambers which had been conceded to them. In the great towns they would not hear of the divine service of the Huguenots, and when they assembled for worship they were followed with hootings and revilings, and not unfrequently fired upon. An article in the peace of the Prince of Condé stipulated particularly for the delivery of the town of Peronne as a place of security to the Protestants, but this excited the liveliest opposition on the part of the townsmen and the neighbouring nobility. It is quite possible that from the Netherlands all available influence was exercised in order

to prevent the execution of this article, for Peronne would have been a most convenient basis for aggressive operations on the part of the Huguenots. Another motive, still weightier, may have been at work. The spirit of provincial separation under one powerful chief had shown itself favourable to the Protestants in Languedoc: the same spirit now operated in favour of the Catholics in Picardy. The governor, D'Humières, who was at law with the Montmorencies, was on this account particularly desirous to keep them at a distance. He therefore formed an association, comprising the nobility, the clergy, and the burghers, against the permission given to the Protestants. The immediate pretext may have been that the German auxiliaries, whose claims were not yet fully discharged, might march upon the town, and put Condé in possession of it by force. But the tendency went direct to the maintenance of the old ecclesiastical system in all its severity. The spirit of the Catholic association, which had occasionally shown itself in 1564 and 1568, began now to manifest itself everywhere.

The waves of opinion have at all times been high and strong in France. From time to time they run in opposing currents. The general bias of men's minds in favour of the Reformation no longer existed. From the opposition to the massacre sprang a turn towards a moderate conciliatory policy, but the consequence of this was, that it awoke the con-

sciousness of its strength in the Catholic element, and it now all of a sudden took possession of the arena. The complete alteration in public feeling was made plain at the elections for the assembly of the States which had been summoned. The Protestants and the Politicians had greatly deceived themselves in their expectations of the result : the Reformed were almost entirely excluded, the majority of votes was against them everywhere.

As to the connection of the Court with this reactionary movement, there can be no doubt that it was approved of. The Court used all the power and influence it could command in order to promote the election of Catholics ; the manifestos of the associations also, although conceived in the most insidious terms, do not exhibit any indication of the King's having taken offence at them ; he desired, on the contrary, that they should be formed everywhere as in Picardy, and with similar zeal, and upon his suggestion they were extended far and wide.

He did not disguise the fact that his only object in the negotiations of 1576 had been to separate his brother from the confederates, and to get rid of their troops, but that it had never been his intention to observe the edict they had forced from him ; he joyfully seized the opportunity which the altered disposition of the nation seemed to offer of relieving himself from its stipulations.

The Assembly of the Estates was opened at Blois

on the 6th of December, 1576, but it was by no means such an Assembly as the Protestants and the discontented had wished and hoped for, nor such as the King had originally intended, in which a free consultation was to be held between the different parties, whence might have resulted a practicable and satisfactory arrangement. In this one party only was represented, and the King endeavoured to impel that one still further than it had itself at first contemplated.

The efforts made by the Court on this occasion to bring the Estates to make a declaration of a character the most decidedly unfavourable to the Reformed are worthy of observation. Even the leaders of the clergy and the nobility had not at first thought of proposing the exclusion of Protestants from the kingdom : Queen Catharine was obliged to use her influence with both estates to bring them to her views. The clause referring to this subject in the speech delivered by the Speaker of the Court of Nobles was composed by Catharine herself, and corrected by the King. In the third estate it required the express announcement that it was the desire of the King, and even then their resolution was by no means so decisive as the Speaker Versonis took the liberty of expressing it.

In the month of December such had been the progress that a requisition was presented to the King by the States, demanding that he would allow

one religion only in the kingdom. Henry III. declared his complete concurrence in these views, for he had sworn to them at his coronation, and against this his first oath no other could bind him\*.

A general war against the Huguenots appeared now unavoidable, especially since, alarmed by these proceedings, they had already taken the field. At Court it was seriously considered in what connection the paid troops could be placed with the gentry, who had been summoned to take arms by the provincial associations, so that they might at the same time assail the strong places in possession of the Huguenots, and advance against them in the open field. Contracts were made with some of the captains of the German mercenaries for the purpose of bringing an army composed of these troopers into the service of France.

It was still a question whether the French Estates, after the experience they had had of the power of resistance possessed by the Huguenots, would resolve upon a war of extermination against them,—whether, after having complained so loudly and frequently of the increase of the debt, of the dis-

\* In the Journal of Nevers, which extends from December, 1576, to March, 1577, we have authentic information concerning the consultations of the Court and the vacillation of its views. There is an extract from it in the Mémoires de Nevers, i. 166, repeated in the thirteenth volume of Mayer, p. 97. The journal in the third volume of the Journal of Estoile, 1744, is still more complete; I keep entirely to it.

tress and poverty of the people, and of the confusion of the finances, they should consent to new pecuniary grants of large amount. Indications soon appeared that their zeal did not carry them quite so far.

The first proposition laid before them referred to the change of indirect into direct taxation, which was to be levied according to the number of hearths in the kingdom ; these were reckoned at three millions, and it was computed that fifteen million livres might be raised from them. But it was impossible that so crude and untried, and at the same time comprehensive, a scheme could be approved of, especially when its execution threw more power than ever into the hands of the finance officers, who were partly foreigners, and altogether regarded as a band of robbers. The proposal was rejected without debate. Even a more moderate demand for an extraordinary supply of two millions was rejected by the deputies of the third estate ; for their instructions went no further than concerned the relief of the King from his debts, and they had no authority to contract fresh burdens. The Court finally had recourse to a sale of the domains, which it was thought the Estates could not refuse. This proposition however aroused not only a transient, but almost a systematic opposition. The learned John Bodin, deputy from Vermandois, maintained that the King was entitled to the usufruct only of the crown lands,

but that the right of property to them was in the people. In the provincial assemblies also, where alone the alienation of the domains could be properly resolved on, the proceeding was not agreed to, for the assigned reason that the deficiency which would thence arise would have to be covered afterwards by the third estate, in some other way.

In the other estates also views of an extraordinary bearing were discussed. The notion was propounded, that no question should be made the subject of any new conference with the royal council except such as had remained undecided in the Estates, but that every one concerning which they had agreed should have immediately the force of law.\* It was further desired that the grievances complained of by the States should not for the future be referred to the royal council exclusively, but that a deputation, to be named, should consult with the Council, and that they should unitedly resolve upon the measures to be taken. It was thought that by this means the number of members in the Council would be limited, and those of them who appeared unfit removed.

\* Recueil de tout ce qui s'est négocié en la compagnie du Tiers Etat, pris des Mémoires de M. Bodin, in Maier, 13, 299. Bodin is in his political work very full on the subject of the domains also, yet, though he holds the fundamental principle firmly, he does not express himself in such republican terms: De Republica, vi. 1002. An "aliénation perpétuelle" was expressly forbidden by an edict of Charles IX. given at Moulins in February, 1566.

Thus the Estates, instead of concurring unconditionally with the King in his warlike views, commenced a dispute with him upon the principles of the constitution. He avoided going into it, but its significance was perfectly evident to him.

But even in the Council itself objections were raised to the proposals of the Court. Belièvre drew attention to the mischievous operation which the assertion, that the King was absolved beforehand by his coronation oath from obligations which he had subsequently assumed with every formality, must have upon the foreign relations of the kingdom.

In this state of general doubt and uncertainty, a solemn consultation concerning the policy to be adopted was opened in the assembled Council on the 28th of February, 1577. The spiritual members, the cardinals, demanded now, as they had before, the establishment of the unity of religion, asserting that, in the face of all difficulties, men must trust in God. They were joined by the Dukes of Guise, Nevers, and Mayenne. Nevers, still in the warmest glow of Catholic zeal, recommended that the war should be undertaken as a crusade, the cost of which, he was of opinion, could be obtained by means of offerings laid before the Most Holy, not for the King, but for God. On the other hand, some, who held themselves to be not less sound Catholics, declared against these views,—the gallant Marshals Byron and Cossé; the Duke

of Montpensier spoke with peculiar emphasis, for he had paid a visit to the King of Navarre, and was convinced that some concessions might be expected from the Huguenot party. All were now eager to know what part the Queen Mother, who still retained the greatest influence in all affairs, would take concerning this question. Easily moved as she was, and decided in the course she adopted for the time, she now joined her influence to that of the moderate members of the Council. "When people can scarcely live," said she, "whence are the means to be obtained for sustaining a war such as this must be? Should the kingdom be ruined by it, religion must also be destroyed, whilst by upholding the former, the latter would also be preserved. It might be a comfort to others that they believed themselves able to maintain religion in its integrity amidst the ruins of the State. She did not belong to them; she advised the King to preserve his kingdom and his person in preference to everything else, and to look forward to a day when the Divine power would perhaps unite the two religions once more\*."

The King decided in accordance with this advice, stating that, under altered circumstances, it was lawful for him to change his opinion.

\* Thuanus, lib. lxiii. p. 180: "Quod concordibus Ordinum suffragiis decerneretur, id ratum esset; in quo dissiderent, id a Rege et Reginæ parentis, regii sanguinis principum, et Franciæ parium et xii. Ordinum delegatorum sententiâ decideretur."

These were consultations and resolutions of immeasurable importance. The Protestants had demanded the assembling of the Estates, in the hope of finding them disposed in their favour, and of seeing a searching reform in accordance with the decree of 1560-61 carried into effect. The King, on the other hand, had summoned the Estates because he contemplated renewing the war against the Politicians and the Huguenots. The Estates took part with neither ; they were Catholics, and did not betray the slightest sympathy for the Huguenots ; but they were by no means so devoted to the Crown as to grant supplies for new undertakings of a war-like character.

The constant fluctuation of the antagonistic powers, their alternate advances and recessions, were such that neither party could indulge the hope of a complete victory over the other. The Crown was compelled to return to the course it had originally marked out, and to tolerate the one party by the side of the other. The execution of the ancient laws of the Catholic Church in reference to the professors of the new faith was proved to be impossible ; all that appeared attainable was to reduce the concessions made to them in such a degree that Catholicism might continue to exist in their neighbourhood without danger.

The war had meanwhile commenced in all quarters of the kingdom, and must be brought to a ter-

mination. The voluntary service of the nobility, the contributions of the clergy, and some grants from the Pope, placed the King in a position to begin the campaign. When he dismissed the Estates, which he did somewhat ungraciously, on account of the slight sympathy they had manifested with his designs, he told them he would not repay evil with evil, but that, on the contrary, he desired above all things to defend them against the Huguenots; that he could not however give occasion to a fresh devastation of the kingdom for that purpose, and that his views were directed only to the establishment of a lasting peace.

The war of the year 1577 is one of the few wars in which a definite object was kept in view, the attainment of which sufficed. Two royal armies appeared in the field, the one under the command of the King's brother, with whom the Duke of Guise was associated, the other under the command of the Duke of Mayenne. The former conquered La Charité and Issoire, two of the most important fortresses in the hands of the Protestants; the latter pressed forward victoriously into Poitou, relieved some places which were threatened, conquered others, and once planted its cannon at a quarter of a league from Rochelle; the Rochelle fleet also suffered some loss.

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Both parties were in earnest, and they therefore speedily agreed to a treaty, which is called the Treaty of Poitiers or of Bergerac, and is amongst the most important of all that were concluded between the two parties.

Its most important object was to put an end to the apprehension that Protestantism would overflow the whole kingdom, which had been the chief occasion of the recent troubles. For the exercise of the Reformed religion such places were appointed as it was practised in on the day of the treaty. The high nobility were to be free in their own dwellings, but all others were limited to one appointed place in each district, and the new creed was entirely excluded from the capital and ten leagues round it. The Huguenots consented that the mixed chambers should be erected in the four southern parliaments only, but they insisted upon remaining capable of all offices\*. The King obtained sufficient command over himself to express his displeasure at the excesses committed on St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572. All governors and officers were to return to the places which they had previously occupied. Henry III. acknowledged the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé as his true subjects. The claims of the

\* Maffei, Gregorio XIII. i. 295.

latter to Picardy were reserved, and instead of Peronne the much more important town of St. Jean d'Angely was placed in his hands for security. Meanwhile all other places were to be given up, except such as were appointed for the Huguenots, namely two in Languedoc, two in Provence, two in Dauphiné, and three in Guienne, of which they were to be put in possession, and for the cost of whose garrisons the King made himself responsible.

The concessions made to the Huguenots were calculated to give them security of existence, whilst the limitations to which they submitted would remove the apprehensions of the Catholics. No one rejoiced more at the agreement than the King himself; he called the peace his own—"The King's Peace"—and said it was as much so as if he had written the articles with his own hand; he had even the idea of calling the town of Poitiers Ville de Paix.

This peace, as it was the result of all the earlier relations and conditions of the kingdom, is the foundation of all the later. It contains, not a theoretical, but a practical solution of the great questions agitated. It indicates the point to which the vigour and energy of the powers opposed in the struggle had brought affairs.

In carrying out the treaty there were still some difficulties and hindrances to be overcome. In Guienne it even came once more to an imprudent

mination. The voluntary service of the nobility, the contributions of the clergy, and some grants from the Pope, placed the King in a position to begin the campaign. When he dismissed the Estates, which he did somewhat ungraciously, on account of the slight sympathy they had manifested with his designs, he told them he would not repay evil with evil, but that, on the contrary, he desired above all things to defend them against the Huguenots ; that he could not however give occasion to a fresh devastation of the kingdom for that purpose, and that his views were directed only to the establishment of a lasting peace.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

## INTRODUCTION.

As in antiquity Athens cannot be thought of without Sparta, Rome without Carthage, so in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries France can neither be comprehended nor understood without the counterpart of the Spanish monarchy.

What was it that Francis I. and Charles V. contended for in their time? The Emperor sought to realize that universal supremacy which was connected in theory with his title; Francis I. maintained the French idea—the idea of France.

There was now no danger to be apprehended from the Empire; but the son and successor of the Emperor, powerful in the possession of extensive territories and the gold of the Indies, renewed the Spanish claim to a predominant authority in the world, and stepped forth himself as the champion of the ancient faith against its assailants. In the adherents to that faith he met with supporters, by whose assent he

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

HENRY III. AND HIS GOVERNMENT DURING  
THE PEACE.

HENRY OF VALOIS had whilst prince attained a high military position, and acquired, whether he merited it or not, a warlike reputation. But how astonished were the Poles, with whom this reputation had contributed to his election, when he arrived amongst them. They expected to see a man of a lofty figure and rough manners, and to hear discourse of war and of arms; instead of which a young man presented himself to them of weak physical organization, who wore jewels in his ears, and yearned for the pleasures of French society which he had forsaken.

To enjoy these pleasures in his own manner was his principal object when he entered his capital after the peace of Poitiers, with the intention of taking up his residence there, and dwelling there more constantly than any French king had done hitherto.

He did not care for the chase, and was seldom seen on horseback, though he rode well; he hated all violent bodily exercise.

While his brother Charles had sought praise by endeavouring to show himself the strongest and most indefatigable of the society in which he mixed, Henry thought it an honour to appear the best dressed and most highly ornamented person in the Court. He would not hold intercourse with any except men of the same taste. He invented several new forms of the strictest etiquette.

In the midst of the violent characters that surrounded him, after so many crimes and civil wars, the embers of which were still glowing, and threatening every moment to burst into a fierce flame, he wished to lead a palace life, divided between pious exercises, the pleasures of the city, retirement, and the enjoyment of the reverence due to the sovereign magistrate.

It was neither his habit nor his inclination to cultivate the society of old generals, politicians, or men of learning, who might have given him some information and instruction. He preferred surrounding himself with young and gay people of handsome exterior, who emulated him in the faultlessness of their costume and the brilliancy of their ornaments. There were in the beginning ten or twelve such persons in attendance upon the King, but in the year 1579 four of them make their appearance as declared

favourites, and were named at Court the Four Evangelists; these were St. Luc, D'O\*, Arques, and Saumont. Sometimes the King retired with them to one of his castles in the country, where he would not allow himself to be regarded in any other character but that of their host, and everything appeared to be perfectly harmless. To be a favourite was not a matter of momentary pleasure, but a kind of fixed position. When the King returned to the capital however it was soon perceived that his young friends had much influence even in matters relating to the State.

Henry III. also strove to distinguish himself from his brother by not following his mother's counsel so implicitly in the business of the government. She always took the chief part in the morning consultations, but the resolutions agreed upon there were frequently altered afterwards by the King himself. Still less was it his intention to give unlimited freedom to the arbitrary power of the great families,

\* Hieronymo Lippomano, 'Relatione di Francia,' 1580. D'O, according to this, must have been much younger than is usually supposed: Lippomano's secretary (506) says he was only twenty-eight years of age in 1579.

† Priuli, Relatione, 1583: "Voltando sottosopra le deliberazioni che sono fatte alla presenza della madre, senza dargliene alcuna parte; il che viene attribuito parte all'umor del Re, ch'è fatto molto ardito nelle resolutioni, e presumò grandamente del suo giudicio, parte ancora all'autorità che hanno seco li suoi favoriti, con li quali in camera sua privatamente ragiona di tutte le cose."

or to allow their private interests to be promoted regardless of other considerations. He found much more satisfaction in bestowing favours upon those who were indebted to himself for their elevation. Arques was created Duke of Joyeuse, and appointed governor of Normandy and Havre-de-Grâce. Saumont was made Duke of Epernon, and appointed successively governor of Metz, Boulogne, Calais, and Provence. Arques was moreover invested with the dignity of an admiral, with special authority over the marine; whilst Saumont, through the post of colonel-general of the French infantry, exercised an uncommonly important influence in the appointment of officers to places in the army.

By these proceedings however Henry III. came into collision with the most powerful party in his kingdom. The progress which the great provincial governments had made in earlier times towards independence, had reached a degree of almost complete consummation during the civil war. The two minorities, one following the other in a period of confusion and embarrassment of all kinds, when the government was necessitated to seek for support from its subjects; the indefiniteness of the laws, and the vacillations of the political system generally, had opened an unrestricted arena for the ambition and selfishness of a few great families, with all their adherents. In the tumult of war and the confusion of parties, when every one had to take counsel of

himself, and to devise measures for his own security, and when by the very defence of their own personal interests men acquired merit, the governors of the provinces had attained a certain consciousness of independence upon the supreme power; and even the governors of fortresses and towns occupied a position which was but slightly dependent\*. Many of them belonged to the first houses in the nation; all were united by the spirit of party. In this state of things neither the commandants of the towns nor the governors of the provinces could be removed from their places at the pleasure of the supreme authority. Each of them was convinced that he could be removed from his office by the judgement and operation of law only, and that in case of death the claims of his relatives and allies to the vacant post should be respected. The notion of offices being hereditary began to prevail even in military organization, in the same way as it already influenced both the financial and judicial administrations.

It must have affected these powerful governors deeply therefore, when the King not only refused to acknowledge their pretensions, but appointed

\* Aluise Contarini, 1572 : "Governi non sono solamente nei più grandi del regno, ma anco son tutti hereditarii, di modo che quando manca un governator, il Re è constretto, per non discontentar i heredi, consentar che i figliuoli, se sono in età, o almanco i più stretti parenti, entrino in loco del morto."

others to the places upon which they had claims, or in the reversion of which they were interested. No well-founded complaint could be made against the King, for he had unquestionable authority to do what he did, but it was not expected from him, and what sort of persons were those he preferred !

The brave Charles Brissac, who believed he had an hereditary claim to the post of Colonel-general, saw himself superseded by a conceited young man destitute of all merit. The Duke of Mayenne, upon whom the reversion of the dignity of Admiral had devolved from his father-in-law, gave up his claim with the greatest unwillingness, although he received a pecuniary compensation. In the same manner Emery de Villiers was deprived of the government of Caen, and Mandelot disturbed in his government at Lyons by the favourites and their relatives ; and they had but little satisfaction to expect further, since the very men who superseded them were the most powerful at the Court.

The majority of the aggrieved governors belonged to the party which had identified itself with the Catholic views in the religious contentions, who regarded the Huguenots as their sworn enemies, and to whom all concessions made to Protestantism were intolerable. They naturally found allies in a portion of the Catholic clergy who had never relinquished their claims to exclusive ecclesiastical dominion in

France, and who had many other disputes besides with the King.

With the internal movement for the restoration of the Catholic system was associated the renewal of the claims of the hierarchy in opposition to the Crown. The men who in ancient times had fallen in the defence of such claims, such as Thomas à Becket, were held up to the reverence of the people, and their virtues depicted in the most lively colours.

In the assembly of 1579-80, which the clergy —  
*Asy of Melun* held in Melun, having avoided Paris lest their consultations should be fettered by local influences, a remonstrance was adopted, in which the two principal requisitions of the clerical party were renewed, namely the adoption of the decrees of the Council of Trent, and the re-establishment of free election. The Bishop of Bazas laid them before the King with much unction, but Henry rejected them without hesitation. "If the clergy wish to reform themselves," said he, "they can do so by the old decrees of the Church; they have only to resolve to devote a third part of their income to the support of the poor, as in ancient times. As to the adoption of the decrees of Trent, the Pope himself no longer urges it, since he sees that they are not suited to the constitution of France." With respect to the right of free election, he said that the authority to nominate to the bishoprics and abbacies had descended to him from his predecessors, by whom it had been exer-

cised with the assent of the Pope and of the Church, and that it was his intention to maintain it. He drew their attention to the party-spirit and the simony which were connected with the clerical elections, and to the danger many of them would run of not being re-elected, should a new system be introduced\*.

The corporation of the clergy however exercised no small influence upon the political administration, in consequence of the financial contract they had entered into with the Crown. They now, in order to be able to fulfil their duties, demanded the liberation of the provinces which had been taken possession of by the Huguenots; they expressed themselves on this subject in such terms as they might have used had they been speaking of an occupation by a foreign enemy, thus indicating how little they approved of the secure position which the Crown had granted to the Reformed†.

Their resistance was doubly powerful, in consequence of the disorder that prevailed in the financial economy of the government, which brought every

\* The account of Thuanus, lib. lxxiii., must be rectified by the *procès verbal* of the Assembly at Melun, from which our notices are drawn.

† In the "Assemblée pour l'audition et clôture des comptes du Receveur Général," it was resolved that "seront remontrées les nécessités des provinces occupées par l'ennemi, lesquelles attendent et requièrent les secours de S. M. pour leur délivrance."

department into a state of the most inextricable confusion.

What was it, asks a writer of the period, that gave the princes of the house of Valois their high consideration in the world? Beside their heroic actions it was the attention they bestowed upon their finances, and the prudent expenditure of their income, which they regarded as some of the most important duties of a monarch.

Nothing in fact had been of greater advantage to the elder Valois, than the circumstance of their having always the command of money. Charles V., and Charles VII., and in an especial manner Louis XI., were remarkable for the order they maintained in the pecuniary affairs of the kingdom; but it was also well understood by Louis XII. and Francis I. as the only means which could enable them to carry on their wars successfully. In Henry II. a deficiency in this financial faculty, and a want of attention to money matters, began to be observed. It was principally the want of funds which compelled him to conclude the peace of 1559, and when he died, he left a debt which for France was one of unexampled magnitude. The administration of his sons and their mother Catharine de' Medici was still more ruinous.

The urgent necessities of war forced them to make the most exhausting efforts: there were some years in which double the amount of the income

was expended, the extraordinary funds being procured from the Italian capitalists, who thus obtained a leading influence over the national credit and the administration.

I shall have another opportunity of returning to the subject of the finances in general; it is sufficient here to remark, that when Henry III. ascended the throne he found a treasury deficit of one million.

The new King endeavoured to relieve his necessities after the manner of his predecessors. Sometimes the government officials were not paid their salaries; at others the interest of the debt was kept back from the creditors; but the chief expedient was the creation and sale of new places, often to the very capitalists themselves, who received a heavy discount on the prices in consideration of prompt payment. This resource however proved all the more inadequate, that the King regarded the quality of liberality as one which should peculiarly characterize the possessor of the supreme authority. The arbitrary measures adopted to obtain money, and the manner in which it was afterwards lavished on the favourites, are both placed in juxtaposition, in a journal kept by a contemporary. The comparison was certainly calculated to arouse unpleasant feelings.

But whilst the land groaned beneath the burden of taxation, the Court could hardly obtain the means of existence. When the troops were mus-

tered, there was frequently not a penny in hand for their pay, nor was there any money to pay the garrisons of the frontier fortresses.

In order to discover a radical remedy for this complication of evils, an assembly of the Notables was called at St. Germain, about the close of the year 1583, in which most important proposals were made for a thorough searching reform. The Parliaments were not in favour with either the King or the nation\*; the abuses which had crept into them, in consequence of the practice of selling judicial offices, were made the subject of earnest deliberation; the revival of the old companies of the Hommes d'Armes was seriously considered, as a means of defence against foreign enemies as well as for the preservation of domestic peace and subordination; but the subject to which the greatest attention was given was the condition of the finances. We find, as the result of the deliberations, a detailed series of resolutions, full of sound views, respecting the recovery of the domains, the raising of the sums paid by the farmers-general from the indirect revenue,

\* Priuli : "Li parlamenti si sono empiti di uomini di bassa condizione, li quali non hanno nè animo nè autorità di poter difendere contra li ministri più intimi del Re il servitio et ben commun." The Journal of L'Estoile mentions a "placard, intitulé *Evangile des Longs Vêtus*." "Il estoit fait contre ceux de la justice, auxquels on en vouloit fort, et qu'on disoit par leur connivence ouvrir peu à peu la porte à ceux qui ne demandoient qu'à lui faire violence."

and the reduction of the *taille*\*. Nor were these consultations and resolutions without effect: a multitude of overpaid officials were in fact struck out of the civil list. The investigation of the financial *employés* commenced in the autumn of 1584, and not a few of even the richest and most distinguished of them took to flight. A number of judicial offices were also abolished without consideration for those who occupied them. The new King took a course which indicated a renunciation of many of his youthful pleasures, and appeared to have placed his personal inclinations under greater control†.

The failings of Henry III. were obvious to every one. His deficient morality, his eagerness for enjoyment, and his dependency upon a few favourites, gave general and but too well founded offence. Occasionally however he rose to the full height of his vocation; he showed an intellectual capacity corresponding with his exalted position, and, although subject to many vacillations, great susceptibility of mind and goodness of disposition. The nation was indebted to him for the Pacification; and though his favourites had places in the Council, he took care that there were in it also men of talent, by whom they were controlled. The government com-

\* Articles et Propositions, etc., en l'Assemblée à St. Germain-en-Laye, au mois de Novembre, 1583: Mayer, xiv. 185.

† Augerii Busbequii Epistolæ, Ep. 31: "Rex urget institutum in melius conversæ vitæ."

prehended the necessities of the political administration, and took pains to supply them,—to enforce the rights of the Crown against the powerful governors, as well as against the claims of the clergy,—to favour the general well-being of the state, in opposition to the abuses of the officers, both of the judicial and financial systems.

No prince ever did so much for the capital as Henry III. The former kings preferred their castles on the Loire to a residence in Paris. Francis I. spent most of his time at Fontainebleau or St. Germain, in the neighbourhood; Henry II. held his court somewhat more frequently in the metropolis, and Charles IX. was generally confined to it by the troubles of the religious war; but Henry III. took up his abode there voluntarily, and resided there regularly. It is impossible to describe the rapid manner in which the city increased under him, both in population and the number of houses erected. The institutions of culture, which were formerly looked for in Italy, were now found in Paris. Without giving offence to the old-fashioned portion of the nation, Henry III. patronized the rising comedy as well as the clerical ceremonies, the artistic confraternities, and literary unions\*. He took part himself in an academy intended for the cultivation of languages and philosophy, and inscribed his name in its statutes.

\* Lettres de Pasquier, ix. 12.

Let us throw a glance upon this intellectual movement, which consisted, as we have mentioned above, in the advance of classical studies, and at the same time of the highly-cultivated art and literature of Italy into medieval France, and which made constant progress during the civil war, and prevailed widely in the subsequent interval of peace.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## A GLANCE AT FRENCH LITERATURE.

IN the second half of the sixteenth century there flourished in France some philologists, who, in the comprehensiveness and depth of their knowledge of classical antiquity, exceeded any scholars whom Italy had yet produced, and whose equals have perhaps never since appeared.

The most learned of all printers, Henricus Stephanus, signalized the otherwise unhappy year of 1572 by the publication of a work sufficient in itself to form an epoch in the annals of learning,—it was his Greek lexicon, which may be regarded as the treasury of that language; in it he collected and digested, for the benefit of succeeding generations, all the knowledge of Greek literature which had been previously acquired.

Beside him rose above the multitude his fellow-labourer, Joseph Scaliger, a man who, in the full possession of an erudition which was universal\*,

\* As Casaubon especially estimates it, Epist. 486.

never lost himself in it, and compensated for the petulance with which he sometimes behaved by a faculty of discrimination which looks almost like a power of divination, and which, even in the present day, excites the wonder of kindred intellects.

A step lower down we find learned and sensible expositors and successful imitators of the ancient languages, such as Lambin and Muret, who by their labours brought antiquity nearer to the common comprehension. For in France, if anywhere, a penetrating influence of classical studies was concentrated upon the life and habits of the people.

Peter de la Ramée cannot be properly estimated if viewed through the medium of those works which he devoted to the reformation of logic; but even these are well worthy of attention, exhibiting as they do his declination from the Aristotelian scholastic methods to the Platonic dialectics, and the grounding of rhetoric upon the imitation of nature and of the great authors without regard to long-acknowledged formulæ. But the whole bias of his intellect appears in the plans which he had conceived for the general reform of studies, and of educational establishments. He wished to forsake in all things the path hitherto trodden, to alter the entire system of doctors and professors in the university, and to make the works of the ancients the immediate textbooks of the different branches of study,—the codex of the Civil Law in jurisprudence, Galen and Hip-

pocrates in medicine, and in theology the Old and New Testaments\*.

The last was impossible, at least in Paris, for it involved one of the most important of the demands concerning which the great struggle had taken place. The Sorbonne would not tolerate for a moment any departure from the Vulgate; upon this point they had contended with members of their own society who thought differently from the faculty, and with the rising order of the Jesuits, who, recognizing the necessities of the time, had not scrupled to borrow much even from Calvin and Beza.

In the other branches, on the contrary, the operations of classical literature appeared exceedingly effective. Physicians arose who brought into practice once more the deserted rules of Hippocrates; and it soon went so far, as Ambrose Paré, the reformer of surgery, said, that people were not content with what they found in the ancients, but began to regard their writings as watch-towers from which more might be discovered.

In jurisprudence, where study and practice touch each other most closely, appeared Cujacius, who, by close investigation and thorough comprehension of the ancient sources of law, made its philosophy his own peculiar intellectual property, and found in numerous members of the great juridical corpora-

\* Extract from a memorial directed to Charles IX. in Crévier's '*Histoire de l'Université de Paris*,' vi. 90.

tion zealous imitators and disciples, who sought to apply their knowledge of Roman law to the improvement of the national code.

Dumoulin had already prepared the way for such a blending of both systems, and, with equal knowledge of ancient and modern law, composed a practical commentary on the *Coutumes de Paris*, by which he earned the title of the Papinian of Paris. Dumoulin, besides this, opposed his knowledge of the Roman and ancient French laws to the intrusion of the Papal authority. It is impossible to peruse a more impressive and, at the same time, learned defence of the secular authority than his judicial opinion against the adoption of the decrees of the Council of Trent. The controversy between the spiritual and temporal powers called forth the most lively intellectual efforts; and Stephen Pasquier, who, like most of the learned jurists, had joined the party of the Politicians, made it the peculiar field of his fame.

In the presence of studies like these the old mythic representations of the royalty of the lilies, which had animated the Maid of Orleans in her day, could not long hold their ground\*. But men did not continue steadily in the directly op-

\* Lib. i. c. viii. : "Si urget reipublicæ necessitas... non est expetenda consensio populi, cuius salus agitur, quæ... in principiis prudentiâ consistit" (142). According to the preface of 1584, the most important articles were first composed for the Latin edition.

posite way on which they had entered at last ; even the literature of the age is not always to be taken according to its verbal expression. What we are disposed to regard as the progress of ideas, frequently proves to be a mere momentary excitement. The doctrines of Hottmann and his associates, which they propounded under the immediate impression made upon them by a deed of sanguinary violence, which had been approved of by the sovereign authority, were obliged to recede when further inquiry was made into law and history, and once more the supreme power was regarded as a bulwark against faction. Even then it was so viewed by John Bodin, in his ‘Book of the State,’ the most elaborate, well digested, and best-known work upon that subject which the century produced. Bodin disdained to found the superiority of the sovereign power upon a pretended abdication of the people, —a doctrine from which the most dangerous results had already issued. Even the right of consenting to taxation, which he approved of and recommended, he was of opinion ought not to be absolute; for cases might occur in which the prince, to whose keeping the general weal was entrusted, could not wait for the sanction of the people. He appears penetrated in an especial manner with the idea of the majesty which belongs to the prince, above whom there is God alone : from this he deduces the right of making war or peace, the power of life

and death, exemption from the law, the sovereign jurisdiction, and especially the superiority over the clergy, whose riches, privileges, and independent authority appear to him objectionable. He regards it as a misfortune that there should be more than one religion in a kingdom; but when God permits it so to be, the prince should rather tolerate the separatists than endanger the State; and, above all things, he should never take up arms against them, for in doing so he would put it to the test whether he could be conquered by his subjects or not.

The study of the ancients obtained a general and almost overwhelming influence upon the poetical literature of the age. A few youthful spirits, animated by the genius of antiquity, turned from the ballads and rondeaux with which the poets of the day satisfied the taste of the uneducated multitude, to the ancients, whom they studied to imitate day and night. They undertook to naturalize in their native land, in free French imitations, Homer and Pindar, the Greek tragedy, not without the chorus, Horace and Virgil, Anacreon and Catullus. Ambitious to prove the capacity of their language, they attempted in it new syntactic arrangements; for they regarded the opposite of what was common and usual as in itself poetic; they did not despair even of being able to introduce the measures of the ancients, and making prosody the sovereign rule of the art of poetry in France. It was something like

an invasion of the philological tendencies upon the realm of modern literature. For a moment they gained the victory. Pierre Ronsard, who says of one of his books that he sets no value upon those who are not Grecians and Latinists, appeared to his contemporaries, and to himself, as one of the greatest poets the world had ever seen. Philologists of reputation commented upon his works as they did upon those of the ancients. For all this, he exhibits the acerbity of a new and partial undertaking, to which individual effort lends the tang of capriciousness. He is far from possessing the solid value of the classics, but they must be wilfully blind who would deny to him a brilliant talent for appropriation and utterance, or that elevation and vigour of intellect which was indispensable to the striking out of a new course. At all events he satisfied his own age. It was boasted of by his contemporaries that Ronsard had reproduced some of the most beautiful passages in the ancient poets, which every one had held to be inimitable : such as the descriptions of night, of the commencement of a sea voyage, and of a storm, in Virgil ; of the spinning Parcæ in Catullus ; or one of Bembo's admired sonnets ; or the splendid commencement of a canto of Ariosto. Many deemed that he surpassed the originals\*. Ronsard, with his friends and pupils, joined the Court, by which they were sustained and

\* Compare Pasquier, ' Recherches de la France,' vii. 8, 8<sup>t</sup>.

*Ronsard*

with which they lived. They were most of them priests, provided with good benefices, and firm adherents of the Catholic party ; but that did not prevent them from introducing into France the whole system of poetic heathendom, nor from allowing themselves every kind of poetic liberty even in their lives. They emulated the ancients also in the boldness and nakedness of their representations.

To many serious men of their own party their manner and spirit appeared objectionable, much more therefore to the strictly moral Huguenots ; the caustic and zealous Aubigné turns from them with moral disgust.

The Huguenots had also their poet, who, in one of his effusions, celebrated the peace granted by Henry III., and at the same time availed himself of the opportunity it afforded to finish another work which was for several years the object of universal applause far beyond the ecclesiastical circle. This was William de Saluste, Seigneur du Bartas. His work is entitled ‘The Week of the Creation\* ;’ and in composing it he too took for his model, as is evident, a production of the latter antiquity,—that

Beuve upon Desportes : “ Naturellement païens de forme et d’imagination, les poëtes . . . restèrent bons Catholiques en pratique, et purement courtisans.”

\* \* Les Œuvres Poétiques et Chrestiennes de G. de Saluste, Sr. du Bartas, prince des Poëtes François' (the Huguenots gave this title to Saluste, but the Catholics claimed it for Ronsard). Genève, 1632.

of Georgius of Pisidia. He too, in his descriptions, occasionally vies with the most renowned poets. Retired in his castle at Armagnac, and secluded from all companionship with cultivated society, he took less care than even Ronsard to avoid those daring metaphors in which the meanest ideas are sometimes combined with the most sublime, and strange formations of words ; but he is pregnant with thought, rich in imagery, and not destitute of elevation, and his diction and rhythm flow easily and without effort. He is chiefly distinguished from those clerical poets by the seriousness which characterizes his religious contemplation of the universe. He will not be numbered amongst the poets whom Plato banished from his republic, because they made the good bad, and the bad still more depraved, through whom Helicon became a place of lewd extravagance. He devotes himself to the service of the muse Urania, who appears to him holding a wreath in her virgin hand, which he modestly states he is eager to approach, not for the purpose of seizing it to adorn his brow, but to touch it only with the tip of his finger. He undertook to deliver the whole sacred history to his contemporaries in a poetical form ; he has described the loss of Paradise, the Deluge, the deeds of the Patriarchs, of Moses, of the Judges, and of the Kings. His design was to depict the introduction of the Christian dispensation, and to con-

clude with the consummation of all things—the Sabbath of Sabbaths :—a vast undertaking in the plan, but almost too comprehensive to be completed with unity of design and execution, or to be transmitted to future times in diction that would last for ever.

These works are in general chiefly remarkable for the effect they have had upon subsequent times. Du Bartas is the patriarch of Protestant poetry. Milton studied and made use of his works. The most important object accomplished by Ronsard and his friends, consisted probably in the fact that they attempted in the French tongue the different species of poetry which had been established amongst a more polished people, and introduced this side the Alps the principles of modern classical taste as they had been developed in Italy. But it was reserved for other times, and different talents, to bring these principles to a fuller perfection.

This epoch however produced one author, Michel Montaigne, whose merit was recognized at the time, and has not been since disputed.

Montaigne's mind also was formed by the study of antiquity. If De la Ramée turned from Aristotle to Plato, Montaigne gave the Skepsis the preference over the Academics ; yet he only used it in order to exhibit, in accordance with the convictions awakened in him by other studies, especially those of the latter antiquity, by travel and intercourse, as well

as by the habits and the events of the age, the truth of his subjective ideas, in the midst of a conflict of systems which to him were all doubtful. In the *naïve* development of these ideas consists his talent and his merit. Montaigne, if he does not describe human nature generally, has yet with perfect truth represented the Frenchman, with all the doubts and errors which characterize him, the enjoyments which give him pleasure, the desires and hopes which he cherishes, and, in short, his whole intellectual and sensual being. The peculiar genius of the people is reflected in him. How many are observed to be influenced by his very manner when they only speak of him! Next to the Tales of Queen Margaret, Montaigne's Essays have maintained the first place in the enduring favour of the nation.

French culture appeared to be in the act of rising in this form from the broadest foundation,—the extensive and free study of classical antiquity in connection with the efforts of other nations, and this in the most various directions. The poetical productions of the Middle Ages were however by no means as yet suppressed. The Romances, the various traditional cycles, still issued from the press both of Paris and Lyons\*, in the latter part of the

\* Amadis de Gaul : Lyons, 1575 ; Paris, 1577. Don Flores de Grèce : Lyons, 1572 ; Paris, 1573. Gui d'Antone : Lyons, 1579. Olivier de Castille : Paris, 1587. Huon de Bordeaux, 1586. Tristan, 1577. Lancelot du Lac, 1591. Godfrey de Bouillon, 1580.

sixteenth century. The condition of French literature corresponded with that of the State and of the country, in which manifold peculiarities were still to be recognized.

It is a question whether it was possible for these rich germs to unfold themselves together in France or not. We will not anticipate history. But already many dreaded the return of civil war, with its destructive influences, under the pretext of religion : Montaigne, Du Bartas, and Bodin have a manifest presentiment of such an event.

The direction in which the thoughts of many were tending may be discovered, from amongst other sources, in a hymn of Du Bartas, in which he expresses his wish that the King of Navarre may speedily make his horse drink from the Ebro, and that the Duke of Alençon be able to unite the divided Netherlands, and to make them feel either his favour or the strength of his arm\*. It was precisely from efforts of this kind however that the new struggle in the interior of the land was destined to arise.

\* "Que tout le Pays Bas esprouve sa clémence, ou l'effort de son bras."

## CHAPTER XX.

## COMPLICATION OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS.

THE youngest of Catharine's sons, François de France, formerly Duke of Alençon, now of Anjou, obtained, in the peace of 1576, an establishment which gave him a species of independence on the crown. He was placed in possession of five dukedoms and four counties, with authority to nominate to all spiritual and secular offices within their limits as he should think proper, and a large share in the prerogatives of the crown generally: the decisions of his court of justice in Alençon were final over life and death. Former princes had had apanages of fifty thousand scudi; his were worth more than five times as much, falling little short of one million francs. His court was not much less splendid than that of the King; his pages followed him in just as rich liveries. He had his guards of infantry and cavalry—a Swiss guard—his own particular chapel, and hunting establishment. In appearance he was the very antithesis of the King. His figure

was small, but firmly built, and his movements showed considerable vigour. His features, which were not handsome, were deeply marked with the small-pox ; their expression was lowering, which was not lessened by a thick mass of black hair, which hung at each side of his countenance, but the quick and lively movement of his eyes relieved his otherwise sombre aspect. He made no pretensions to the affability of his brother, but affected rather the rude bearing which becomes a warrior ; he read with avidity the history of those ancient and modern captains to whose fame he aspired, maintained a friendship with soldiers of reputation and talent, like De la Noue\*, and undertook foreign enterprises on his own responsibility.

In the year 1578 he was induced to yield to the instances of the Count of Lalaing, who was desirous of adding to the German troops collected by the Prince of Orange an auxiliary force of strict Catholic principles, and appeared in Mons at the head of ten thousand men, for the purpose of resisting the war-like undertakings of Don John of Austria. The affair made the greater noise, as it was asserted the King of France had approved of his brother's proceedings. Lippomano asserts that this was an empty rumour ; that the campaign was commenced not only without the King's consent, but against his

\* Prinli, who only follows the general report : “è liberalissimo, vigilante, di animo grande.”

will ; that he was intimately acquainted with the circumstances, for he had been himself engaged in the negotiations to which they had given rise; that when the matter had proceeded so far the King was unwilling to adopt measures against his brother,—that this was the extent of his complicity ; how easily might Anjou, with his own troops and the German auxiliaries, have turned their arms against France itself \* !

The whole undertaking foundered at that time through its own internal difficulties, the mutual distrust of all the different parties, and the want of clearness in their common relations. The Duke was not particularly displeased with this result.

After some time, under altered circumstances, which promised more sympathy with his enterprise, he did not hesitate to renew it.

It is a proof of the extreme weakness of the public feeling in Europe at this period that the King of Spain should have succeeded so easily, in the year 1580, in taking possession of the vacant throne of Portugal. The claim which he set up of having derived his right from his mother, a daughter of King Manuel, was by no means unquestionable, for there was in Portugal an ancient law by which all

\* "Essendo andato di già in Fiandria così di nascosto, et trovandosi in essere tanta quantità di gente come haveva, si risolse il Re di non impedirlo di quella gagliarda maniera che forse avrebbe potuto, dubitando che . . . sdegnato dappoi ritornasse con Casimiro."

foreigners were excluded from the throne. The Duke of Braganza, who had married the daughter of a brother of the deceased king, maintained that the right of succession was in him and in her children, by virtue of the rule of representation. There was besides a natural son of the royal house, Antonio, Prior of Crato, the shade upon whose birth did not absolutely exclude him from the throne of a dynasty whose founder was of spurious descent, and who moreover endeavoured to prove that he had been born in lawful wedlock. All these deductions however vanished before the power of King Philip, who thought it sufficient that his claims had been approved of by his own theologians and jurists, and by force of arms took possession of the throne which made him sole ruler of the Pyrenean peninsula, and sovereign lord of both the Indies.

The whole was effected before any earnest apprehension of the consequences likely to result from such a preponderance of power was felt in either England or France. Then indeed Catharine formed the resolution of setting herself in opposition to King Philip.

She advanced claims of her own upon Portugal, which she derived from the house of Boulogne; but the general opinion then was that her chief object in this was to show to the world that she also belonged to one of the reigning families of Europe. Notwithstanding these claims however, she recog-

nized Don Antonio, and after Portugal was lost she endeavoured to put him in a condition to maintain himself at least in Terceira, for everything depended upon preventing Philip from taking possession of the Azores, then the great place of refreshment for voyagers from both the Indies. Could this be effected, he would not be able to derive any advantage from either the Portuguese colonies or his own, and Portugal would become a burden to him rather than a source of strength\*. It has been asserted that the Queen had stipulated for the cession of Brazil to herself in the event of Don Antonio proving victorious. I find a fort mentioned, which the French raised soon after in Brazil.

The resistance of Europe to the increasing power of Spain showed its chief force however in the Netherlands.

Just at this time the northern provinces formally renounced the dominion of King Philip, and elected the Duke of Anjou their sovereign, under conditions which they deemed necessary for the preservation of their freedom. The Duke seized with joy the offer of a prospect so gratifying to his ambition.

The town of Cambray, which had still a garrison of the Estates, but was sorely pressed by the Walloon troops of Prince Alexander of Parma, solicited aid

\* She said so to the English ambassador in a conversation which took place in the garden of the Tuilleries.—*Mémoires de Walsingham*, 493.

from the Duke of Anjou. He immediately collected a considerable army, composed chiefly of the nobility, to whom war had become almost indispensable. The Walloons retreated before him; he reached Cambray in August, 1581, and declared himself lord of the city.

The project of his marriage with Queen Elizabeth appeared now to be taken up in earnest. Having accomplished something, he paid a visit to England, where he was received in the most gracious manner by the Queen, and rings were exchanged between them. The betrothing was celebrated in the Netherlands with public rejoicings. In February, 1582, the Prince appeared at Antwerp, furnished with a considerable sum of money, and took possession of the dukedom of Brabant, with the ancient customary forms. Not long afterwards he was also chosen Count of Flanders, with the approval of the Prince of Orange, and it seemed as if there would not be any great difficulty in expelling the Spaniards from the Walloon provinces.

The Duke at this moment occupied a very important position. In the Netherlands the native nobility, who were satisfied with his high rank, as well as all who yet adhered to Catholicism, united with him\*. He appeared destined to effect that union between England and France, in opposition

\* Priuli, 'Relazione di Franza,' 1583: "La nobiltà non poteva patire che il Principe d'Orange fusse a loro di così gran lungo

to Spain, which the Admiral had once contemplated. His marriage with Queen Elizabeth was made contingent upon the conclusion of an alliance offensive and defensive between the two powers.

The King of France now, as formerly, declined any direct participation in his brother's enterprise; he even showed him the adverse side of it in conversation; but the influence of his mother, who took the most vivid interest in the proceedings, was overpowering. Amongst other incidents which show how Anjou was favoured, the supplies furnished by France to the Spanish Walloon provinces were prohibited, and several Italian bankers who had remitted sums of money to the Spaniards were expelled the kingdom.

A fortunate military action might have then been of immeasurable consequence. Contemporaries remark how much depended upon the French fleet, which put to sea under Filippo Strozzi, of Brouage, in order to defend the Azores against the Spaniards\*; had he been successful they were of opinion that all the Portuguese would have been set in motion, and that the discontented even in Spain would be excited to movements which must have issued in an insurrection.

superiore, e pareva loro che si andasse a strada di introdur un governo popolare; . . . non potevano sopportare che fusse levato del tutto l' esercitio della religion Catolica;" all motives which subsequently favoured the restoration of the Spanish dominion.

\* Connestaggis, *De Portugalliae Conjunctione*, 473.

But still the repose of the Spaniards was united with strength, and superior to the French nobility; besides the Spaniards, through the build of their ships, were better prepared for naval operations upon those waters, and better furnished with artillery. Strozzi was defeated and slain on the 26th of July, 1582, and all Don Antonio's prospects vanished in — the air. The Spanish admiral caused it to be announced to the French whom he had taken prisoners, that as no war had been declared between the two kingdoms, they could be regarded only as pirates. He caused such of them as were gentlemen to be beheaded, and the rest he put to death in an ignominious manner.

The intelligence of this excited a powerful and passionate sensation amongst the French, to which the Duke of Anjou was not a little indebted for a new and considerable force, which marched to his assistance under leaders of reputation, and placed him in a position to undertake some decisive movement against the Spaniards. Instead of immediately attacking the enemy however, he felt encouraged by the presence of so many brave warriors to attempt making himself, first, actual sovereign of the country, and then master of Antwerp. The citizens of Antwerp however proved themselves capable of making a more obstinate resistance than he looked for; the tumultuary assault of the French ended in their defeat, and with the failure of this

attempt their whole enterprise must be regarded as at an end.

This event was of more advantage than Anjou's success would have injured him to the King of Spain. The taking of Cambray induced the Walloons to receive Spanish troops once more—which made the complete re-establishment of the Spanish superiority again possible. The disorder which arose amongst his enemies in consequence of the failure before Antwerp removed his fear of any danger from that side, and opened to him the way to further conquest. The Duke of Anjou, blamed by every one for having undertaken such objects, and dissatisfied with himself for not having succeeded, though still refusing to give them up\*, returned to France, where in the spring of the year he was seized with an illness which terminated in his death. Alexander of Parma meanwhile proceeded from one conquest to another—now in Brabant, and now in East and West Flanders. Ypres was taken, Bruges and Freie again acknowledged the King of Spain, Ghent surrendered after the murder of the Prince of Orange, and Brussels and Antwerp were closely pressed, and in the most imminent danger.

Under these circumstances the conviction was felt

\* From Busbequius's letter of May 20, 1583, we should be led to the conclusion that he intended to make Dunkirk, which was still the subject of negotiation, the seat of his government. Ep. 18, 504.

with double force in all the unsubjugated provinces that the restoration of the Spanish government was inevitable, unless the King of France should oppose it. The Netherlands did not conceive it possible that France could contemplate the progress of the Spaniards with calmness. They hoped that, as Henry II. had once come to the assistance of the Germans against Charles V., the son of the King would protect them against the son of the Emperor. In the beginning of the year 1585 a solemn embassy from the united provinces of Brabant, Flanders, Holland, Zealand, Guelders, Zutphen, Utrecht, Friesland, and Mechlin, appeared at the French Court to offer to the King of France the sovereignty in the same manner as Charles V. had possessed it, with the reservation of their laws and their religion only, and to induce him, if possible, to unite those lands indissolubly with the French crown, offering him at the same time their oath of allegiance.

A proposal like this was peculiarly adapted to rouse the ambition of the French; but perhaps the difficulties which the Duke of Anjou had met with were still too fresh in their memories; besides this however, many disapproved of the undertaking on the ground that the union of the Netherlands with France could not be accomplished. Still the King of Spain was manifestly aiming at the predominant authority in Christendom. It would be therefore an incalculable advantage if those rich provinces

could be wrested from him in any degree. With these views Catharine de' Medici refused to surrender Cambray, the right to which had devolved upon her as inheritrix to her son.

To other French princes and in other times such an offer would have been irresistible, but to Henry III. it appeared to contain something terrific.

He was dissatisfied with the political administration, which, though conducted by himself or in his name during his reign, was not attended with the wished-for consequences. He felt the general agitation which kept the nation in a state of feverish excitement as a personal misfortune. For the first time he recalled to his memory the designs he had cherished when he arrived in France to take possession of the throne, and ascribed all the evils which had since arisen to the false counsel then given him, and which he had been unhappily induced to follow. One of the most remarkable effusions of a royal mind which has ever seen the light, is the letter of Henry III., which he addressed on one occasion when his mind was filled with such thoughts, to Villeroy, the Secretary of State. "It is mentioned in the Scriptures," he says, "that one of the Jewish kings was ruined through evil counsel: may not this lesson find an application to the King of France? The good-will of our subjects is lost, and we are diverging further from the way in which it might be regained. From the pressure of debts there is

no relief to be obtained even in times of peace. The very circle nearest to the King swarms with heretics ; attempts against the State are as common as eating and drinking ; the number of the discontented exceeds computation, and is daily increasing ; every one, except those who preserve their truth and fidelity, most carefully makes his own party, and the whole system of the nation is shaken. I think I see very clearly what would be of advantage to us," he continues, "but I am like those who, out of obedience, would rather be drowned than save themselves. I might be too the only one who entertained such views, and I may be deceiving myself\*!"

This was the same prince who had acquired his reputation in the struggle with the Huguenots, and adopted the fearful executions of the bloody nuptials, and who was animated by a thoroughly Catholic spirit. He had granted a pacification, but it was limited according to his own good pleasure, and every advance of Protestantism was adverse and distasteful to him, and its presence hateful. He maintained the most friendly relations with England, and wore the English orders which had been sent to him at the close of 1584, and which he had received with all pomp, but at the same time he anathematized Queen Elizabeth in his heart.

It is doubtful whether either he or his mother

\* Letter of the King to Villeroy, Lyons, August 12, 1584, printed in Groen's Archives, supplement 229.

were in earnest in their last friendly advances to England. In the State papers, in which the Court strove to justify its conduct towards the other Catholic powers, sharp-sighted contemporaries imagined they could discover, beneath the surface, that nothing would have been more agreeable than a new alliance with Spain, to be brought about perhaps by means of a marriage, with the Netherlands for a dowry. Catharine did in fact confess something of this design to the Venetian Priuli when he was taking his leave in the year 1583. She told him that she was disposed only to go so far as to enter into an agreement with the King of Spain, which might terminate all disputes, and bring the difficulties regarding Portugal and the Netherlands to a conclusion by means of a marriage\*.

But even this must not be regarded as a revelation of her real intentions; for to negotiate upon opposite sides had now become the habit, and the very nature, of Catharine.

It was not to be expected however that King Henry, whose heart was filled with Catholic zeal, and who loved peace above all things, even though political necessity sometimes led him to take a dif-

\* Priuli: "A me disse S. M. che lei aveva messo pensiero alle cose di Portogallo con questo fine solamente, di vedere se poteva tirare il Re Cattolico a fare un fascio di tutte le difficoltà che versano al presente et per le cose di Portogallo et per quella di Fiandria, e venir a una buona compositione col mezzo di qualche matrimonio."

ferent course, would resolve upon undertaking an enterprise which would have brought him in the closest confederacy with the Protestant element, and involved him in a war, the termination of which could not be predicted. He heard the offers of the Netherlands without disapproval, committed the negotiations concerning them to his chancellor, appeared to yield upon some difficulties arising out of individual questions, but, in conclusion, all proved useless. He adorned the ambassadors with gold chains, but he declined their proposals.

But whilst he delayed and hesitated, and at last showed a decided inclination to peace, Philip regarded him in no other light than as his antagonist. Proceeding constantly in his gloomy career, and not without reference to this embassy, which was not as yet dismissed, the Spanish monarch at length resolved upon decisive measures of precaution\*.

\* According to the Venetian Ambassador in Spain, Philip gave the following as his reasons: "Che quel Re ascolta li suoi ribelli anzi che tratta . . . di ricever il possesso di Fiandria."

## CHAPTER XXI.

## ORIGIN OF THE LEAGUE.

PHILIP II. had been already frequently urged by his most confidential ministers, as the Cardinal Granvella, to meet and oppose the indirect hostility of the French by an open declaration of war,—a course which, they maintained, he would have been completely justified in adopting. The King, who was naturally indisposed to adopt new views of his own free choice, and was moreover fully occupied with enterprises of a far different character, had never yet resolved upon the course which such counsels pointed out. He became by degrees possessed, on the contrary, with the notion of repaying like with like, and of responding to the support which the French Court had given to the Netherlands, by offering assistance to the French rebels, and especially since these were Catholics.

In these views the Guises and their party, not

yet rebels, but very much inclined to be so, fully concurred.

In consequence of the ancient community of religious and political principles which existed between Henry III. and the Guises, and especially since his consort belonged to their family, they had cherished the hope of being able to exercise a great influence upon the Government. Instead of this they saw themselves forced by a few favourites into a subordinate position, excluded from the sight of the King, and removed from all participation in the management of affairs,—their claims not only neglected but their position imperilled. Their jealousy of the Princes of the blood never slept for a moment, but the Duke of Epernon was to them the most hated of mankind. The King had even suggested to Duke Henry of Guise, that he should resign the place which he held of a *Grand-maitre* in favour of Epernon. Sometimes we find them giving expression to their complaints to the Spanish envoys, who occasionally visited them in secret. They were less affected on account of religion than they were by the personal offences they had received, and feared to receive, which were almost exclusively the moving causes of their disaffection. As yet however they betrayed no symptoms of a definitive understanding with Spain\*.

\* In Cabrera's Felipe, ii. 1010, there is a description of the state of things at the French court, by Alonzo de Sotomayor, who

That Philip had long previously entered into a peculiar connection with this house in opposition to the royal authority in France, is a complete error.

We have already mentioned the entreaties addressed, many years before, by the Cardinal of Lorraine to King Philip, and that they were not attended to. As the events did not occur which were apprehended, it was not deemed necessary on either part to proceed further in establishing a general good understanding. Sometimes, even as in the year 1570, the house of Guise was rather opposed to the views of Spain than in their favour.

In the years 1577 and 1578 negotiations took place between the Duke of Guise and the Spanish envoy Vargas; but it appears, from the correspondence of Vargas, that they were only of a general character, affecting chiefly a plan concerning Scotland, which never was carried into effect\*.

The declaration of a Spaniard, named Salcedo, in the year 1582, created an intense sensation. He had been arrested for having formed a design against the Duke of Anjou, and accused a whole multitude of Frenchmen, who were zealous Catholics, and of considerable note, as participating in his guilt. He retracted these charges afterwards, and was considered to have been with Guise. Its date must be later than that which it bears, for Caumont appears in it as Duke of Epernon. He is described as all-powerful: "Animo cauteloso, ambitioso, atrevido, absoluto, dado á placeres," etc.

\* Extracts in Mignet, 'Antonio Perez,' p. 24.

demned to death for having falsely made them. If the declarations made upon oath by the most distinguished of the accused parties may be believed, there can be no doubt that the charges were wholly destitute of truth, and were even the result of fraud\*. Salcedo was notorious for his fraudulent and violent conduct. The Spaniards, who were probably innocent in the transaction, saw these proceedings without displeasure; they imagined that from the distrust and suspicion to which they must give rise amongst the French, something might result to their advantage.

But charges of this kind, founded upon a general probability, are frequently the precursors of great events. In the year 1583 we find actual serious negotiations going on between Philip and the Guises.

John Moreo, an Aragonese and a Knight of Malta, was commissioned by Philip II. to take up his residence in France, for the purpose of investigating the actual position of affairs, and of confirming the discontented in their disposition, by holding out to them hopes of aid from the King of Spain. The Duke of Mayenne, whom he found in Poitou, with a few more trustworthy Catholics, accompanied him immediately to Paris, in order to form a definitive

\* Villeroy, Mémoires: “Je jure et appelle Dieu et ses anges, suppliant sa divine justice que son ire soit sur moi et mes enfans.”—Busbeck told the Emperor, October 1, 1582, that Salcedo had coined false money, with which he purchased an estate, and that when he was obliged to leave it he set it on fire.—Epp. 478.

resolution with Guise, upon whom everything depended. Guise was greatly inclined to join them, but he felt some scruples at the idea of rising in open insurrection against his king; the Jesuits who surrounded him, and particularly Father Claude, recommended him at least to fortify his conscience with a word of encouragement from the Pope. There was no agreement entered into for that time, and Moreo hastened into Spain to report proceedings to his king.

In the spring of 1584 negotiations were once more resumed between the French and Spanish courts for an arbitration of all their differences. The Spanish ambassador was convinced that if Cambrai were given up to the French, not as their right, but by a seasonable concession, they would bind themselves to interfere no further in the affairs of the King of Spain\*. The ambassador, Juan Baptista de Tassis, maintained at the same time a close correspondence with Henry of Guise, but there was nothing more spoken concerning his rising against the King. Guise's thoughts were much more decidedly directed at this time towards Scotland; he

\* Letter of Tassis, May 10, 1584: "Agora mas que antes holgarian de que V. M. saliese á la proposition hecha los dias passados de la dicha Reyna en lo de Cambrai, y que por aqui se entallasse alguna reconciliacion y renovacion de amistad... se les quisiesse desar pacifica esta possession figura se me, que de muy buena gana se obligarian á no empacharse en ninguna cosa mas que nos toque."

was persuaded that King James was ready to adopt the old religion, and to emancipate himself from the dominion of the English faction. For the promotion of this, he demanded assistance both in men and money, as well as the promise of future supplies. The Spanish ambassador advises his master to comply with these demands; for he says the world may one day assume such an aspect as will prove that such money had been right well laid out.

As yet we observe that there was no project of an association against the King of France, but that certainly there was established an excellent understanding, and a close connection.

The Duke of Anjou and Alençon, as has been already mentioned, died on the 10th of June, 1584. He left no memorial of himself through great deeds, actions, or results; his death was more momentous than his life.

For what had been hitherto spoken of, but as if of some secret matter which was read of in the stars, now acquired a nearer probability in respect to political prospects; for as Henry III., the last scion of the Valesian line, was childless, the extinction of that race was foreseen, and with that was associated the prospect of the greatest changes. The right of succession to the throne would, in that case, devolve upon the chief of the Bourbons, the King of Navarre, who was a Huguenot. It cannot be wondered if the anticipation of such an event caused an excite-

ment throughout the whole realm, and roused even neighbouring nations.

The Netherlanders had this probability in view when they made their offer to King Henry; if they had not, they would not have gone so far as they did.

But if the Spaniards, twenty years before, saw a danger in the evanescent and dubious authority which Anthony of Navarre acquired as Lieutenant-General only of France, how much greater must have been their apprehension at the prospect of the devolution of the French crown itself upon the head of his active and energetic son. They were convinced that they ought to prevent it, for it would render the war between the two nations inevitable, and imperil the existence of the Spanish monarchy and the whole European system. King Philip's son was just seven years of age; what, it was asked, could be expected of him in the face of such a formidable enemy, should any misfortune befall the King?

Philip II. might have been induced to tolerate a weak Protestant party in France\*; but, as his ambassador Tassis said, that a man "who was a heretic" should receive into his own hands the en-

\* He had also occasionally negotiated with Henry of Navarre; but what Hieronymo Lippomano wrote once from Spain is probably quite true: "Intendo che a quel di Navarra segli daranno buone parole, a quel di Guisa buoni fatti."

tire authority of the French kingdom, to that the exalted Catholic position he held would not permit him to consent. "I see no arm," adds the ambassador, "which is able to prevent this event from taking place except the arm of the Duke of Guise."

Regarded in themselves, the Guises were by no means capable of effecting all the ambassador states. Their hereditary possessions were unimportant, and they exercised over their governments such authority only as the King had delegated to them. That which lent them weight and influence was their party position, as the Spaniards saw from the beginning,—the attachment felt to them by the zealous Catholics, whose dissatisfaction with the toleration shown to the Huguenots was constantly increasing.

We have been made acquainted already with this perpetually fermenting, energetic, and violent element of Catholicism in France. After it had succeeded in consolidating itself in Paris, and extruding all Huguenotic forms, in the year 1562, it exhibited independent movements from time to time in the provinces. We have mentioned the association of the nobility, in the years 1564 and 1568, which would have assumed a threatening aspect towards the Court, had it not remained true to Catholicism. The alliance formed in the year 1572 between the governors, whose places were imperilled, and the fanaticism of the multitude, and the League of 1576, which arose in a province, but under the authority

of the Court, extended itself over the whole kingdom, and which it was found more difficult to break up than had been anticipated. It had imbued itself with municipal and clerical, as well as aristocratic interests, and it now joined heartily with the Duke of Guise, whose father had fallen in defence of its cause.

It has been said that Henry of Guise, relying on these powerful confederacies, and anticipating what was likely to occur from them, had long since begun himself to indulge ambitious notions in reference to the crown. It had been alleged that the Guises were descended from Charlemagne, and therefore possessed a more legitimate right to the French crown than the reigning dynasty. Genealogies were composed for the purpose of supporting this view; the book usually quoted was the work of Francis de Rosières, a priest of high rank in the Church, at Toul\*, and for many years a travelling companion to the Cardinal of Lorraine. In this book the claims of the Guises are traced to a period of still higher antiquity.

According to this author even old Merovius was a usurper; he had dispossessed the lawful heir, Albero, son of Clodin, from whom sprang in the direct

\* 'Stemmatum Lotharingiae ac Barri Dueum tomii vii., ab Antenore ad hæc Careli III. tempora:' Parisiis, 1580. Compare "Procès Verbal du Pardon demandé par Fr. de Rosières," in the appendix to the 'Satyre Menippée,' ii. 406.

line Itta, who brought her rights to her husband, Eustache de Boulogne. The Carlovingians also sprang from Albero, but in the collateral line only. In Eustache however, who was a descendant of Charlemagne's both paternally and maternally, the rights of both lines were thus united, and descended in the course of time to the house then ruling in Lorraine. The Capetians were all represented as usurpers, and Hugh Capet as a tyrant. The author does not derive the Lorraine family directly from Charles of Lower Lorraine, but he brings them into connection with him. He endeavours to show that the house of Lorraine, for which he is animated with a thoroughly provincial and peculiar fanaticism, is not only completely French, but that it is of nobler extraction than more powerful royal races. He handles the then living king, Henry, in the same manner as he does the whole of the French dynasty, with the most astonishing contempt. His observations concerning the death of the Cardinal of Lorraine are satirical. He blames the King for giving himself up to the guidance of persons who have made him effeminate and useless\*. All is not historically false in Rosière's work, and in those times it must have created a powerful sensation. We know that the Cardinal of Lorraine thought

\* "Jam à publico rerum statu alienior domesticæ curse indulgere copit," p. 369. He also mentions the Paris Matins: "Hisce S. Bartholomæi matutinis piè absolutis."

the Salic law ought not to be observed\*; and the principles advanced in this book of one of his friends, accorded perfectly with the design of placing a prince of the house of Lorraine upon the throne of France.

But leaving out of view this lofty mark of their ambition, the prospect which the succession of the King of Navarre to the throne opened before the Guises, was one in the highest degree inimical to their position as French magnates. Henry III. directed Epernon to proceed with a splendid retinue to the King of Navarre, and to say that the French monarch was prepared to recognize him as heir-presumptive to the crown, provided he would become a Catholic and visit the Court. Before leaving the city Epernon took leave of all the nobility of the Court, but to the Guises he paid no compliment whatever. They regarded it as sufficiently dangerous that Henry had agreed to the proposal, since the position of the favourite would have been made still more secure by an alliance with the successor to the throne; but how much more so would it be if the Navarrese prince should remain firm in his religion and yet succeed to the throne! The champions of Catholicism in France were as little willing

\* Pasquier, *Lettres*, xi. Compare the Florentine despatch in Alberi, *Catarina Medici*, 194. Towards the close of 1584 the favourites endeavoured “per abassare le parte del Duca di Guisa e crescere quella del Re di Navarra, col quale sono legati per la volontà del Re.”

as the Spaniards that such an event should take place.

Henry of Guise had still a scruple. The ambassador who carried on the negotiations with him, asserts that he feared to appear as a rebel\*. He asked the Pope, Gregory XIII., for his opinion upon the proposal.

The Pontiff answered, that “if the object was of a religious nature alone, he gave it his blessing†”—an oracular response, which the Pope could maintain under all circumstances, and which Guise interpreted in his own favour; for his most important object was in fact the maintenance of the Catholic religion, and all others might appear as simply means to that end.

There is a little cabinet in the castle at Joinville which has long been pointed out as the chamber in which the League was formed. In the middle of January there were assembled there the two delegates of the King of Spain, Tassis and Moreo, who had carried on the negotiations, the Dukes of Guise and Mayenne, who at the same time represented the Cardinal Guise and the Dukes of Au-

\* Tassis, 443, speaks of the “rebellionis nota, quam abhorrebat Guisius... nactus religionis fundamentum, ad cuius conservationem nihil esse credebat, quod non liceret, animum ad arripienda arma componere coepit.”

† Maffei, Gregorio XIII. c. ii. 319. The Duke de Nevers was not however by any means satisfied with the declaration from Rome, as he stated at length to Thuanus, lib. lxxxi. p. 11.

male and Elbœuf, and besides these a delegate from the Cardinal of Bourbon. They concluded the Convention with some secret articles which have hitherto remained almost unknown. The sense of both is as follows.

Proceeding from the fundamental principle that a heretic could not be King of France, they declare themselves of one mind that the crown shall not pass to the King of Navarre, but to his uncle, the Cardinal of Bourbon, a younger brother of King Anthony, who by his plenipotentiary joined the League and adopted this claim. Further, their union is intended to effect the complete extirpation of Protestantism, not only in France, but in the Netherlands also. The King of Spain promised for the first year a subsidy of one million scudi. The French princes on the other hand, regarding themselves as already in possession of the royal authority, bound themselves to renounce the alliance with the Turks, as well as the system of piracy carried on in the West Indian waters; to restore Cambray, and to assist in completing the conquest of the Netherlands. In a few special articles they add some other very extraordinary conditions. They promise to deliver Anthony the Prior of Crato into the hands of the King of Spain, but under stipulations that, although he is to be kept in secure custody, he is to be treated with kindness. On the declination of the King of Navarre from the Catholic

religion, they formed the further design of putting the King of Spain in possession of all his territories beyond the frontiers of France, as Lower Navarre and Béarn\*. Guise and Mayenne bound themselves for the delivery of the Prior, and the Cardinal of Bourbon undertook for the residue of Navarre, so decisively did the territorial interests of Spain influence the formation of this treaty. Philip judged that he was not only promoting the cause of religion, but also advancing the interests of his kingdom, when he sent to the confederates large sums of money, which placed them in a condition to prepare for the contest.

King Henry III. was still engaged in those deli-

\* "Instrumentum de dedendo Antonio Portugalensi," and further, "Instrumentum donationis facta à Cardinale Bourbonio in favorem Regis Catholici," which appear also as articles 48th and 49th of the treaty, are to be found in the commentaries of Tassis, quoted above, p. 456. The original document of the Convention itself is dated "ultimo die anni 1584." The first instrument is dated "diebus Calendis Januarii, 1585;" the second on the 16th of January: according to Tassis the latter is the true date of these agreements (446). The secret articles are wanting in Dumont, whose impression possesses in general but little authenticity: they have been overlooked up to the present time. A brochure, entitled 'Ragguaglio delle Pratiche tenute con il Re di Spagna degli Signori Guisi,' was circulated at the time, and may still be found in collections of political papers. According to its authority the greater part of the stipulated sum was not to be paid until the League had delivered either the city of Marseilles or Lyons into the hands of the King of Spain. There is no authentic proof of this condition, nor any trace of it in the actual treaty.



berations noticed above, under the idea that peace and war in Europe depended upon the course he might adopt; when he saw all of a sudden a warlike movement which he had not commanded in actual operation in his own kingdom. His first thought was to secure Henry of Guise in Joinville, and a division of the garrison at Metz was appointed to execute the design; but Guise was apprised of it at the critical moment, and fled to Châlons, where the gates were opened to him, in opposition to the royalist commandant. A great number of other places also fell into the hands of the Guises, either through the contrivance of the burghers or the consent of the governors.

Their manifesto appeared in the middle of April.

It is principally directed against the favourites, who had thrust all others from the administration of the State, and taken exclusive possession of it themselves. They had not only made the decree issued by the last assembly of the Estates, which was to have restored all France to its religion, of none effect, but, on the other hand, all favours were bestowed upon the persecutors of the Catholic Church. The setting up of a successor to the throne was in accordance with that disposition, but in the Most Christian kingdom it must never come to pass that a heretic should obtain the supreme authority. The subjects of the kingdom are in no way bound to recognize the dominion of a prince who is not a

Catholic, for the first oath taken by the King on his coronation is to maintain the Catholic Apostolic Roman religion\*.

Let us pause a moment to consider this manifesto, in which religious views are associated with various objects of a political character.

The spirit of the ancient autonomy of the French magnates animated the Guises in all its power. They could not live without exercising some influence upon general affairs, and their first object was to maintain their own position unassailed. They represent it as one of the principal grievances that persons who had obtained places by meritorious services were compelled to give them up in consideration of a pecuniary compensation. They demand that such shall no longer be the practice, and that persons shall not be deprived of their offices except in the cases which were clearly designated, and by the sentence of regular judges taken from the Parliaments†.

They adopt as their own all the old complaints of

\* I take this from a letter of Don Bernardino de Mendoza, April 5, 1585. The garrison at Metz was ordered, "que saliendo á la deshilada viniesse á Chamville á prender al Duca de Guisa." I have not been able to find anything in contemporary documents of what Cardinal Ossat says concerning Guise's first intention to seize the capital and the person of the King. It appears to have been merely a proposal, and to have been rejected by Guise.

† Joannis Baptiste de Tassis Commentariorum de Tumultibus Belgicis sui temporis libri octo: Hoynck van Papendrecht, Analecta Belgica, tom. ii. pars i. p. 433.

the nobility, the clergy, and the towns. They ask for regular meetings of the Estates every three years, in which every one may bring forward his grievances in perfect freedom. The manner in which they express themselves respecting these meetings is worthy of remark. They are conferences, they say, between the prince and the people for the purpose of considering and taking account of their equally ancient and equally sacred mutual obligations.

In most of the great towns, as in Paris, the municipal and the Catholic interests had entered into a certain alliance with each other. As the Government had interfered with other customary laws, such as those of jurisdiction, for example, so did it now appear as a similar interference when it demanded tolerations for those of another creed. The Guises could reckon upon approval when they warned the towns against receiving royal garrisons.

Thus the attempt at reform in the year 1583, however justifiable in itself, now turned out to the disadvantage of the King. We are informed that the League was supported by the credit of a high finance officer, who had been compelled to resign his place in consequence of the examination which had been instituted regarding that administration, and who had fled into Franche Comté. In the Parliament they had, during the time of their authority, acquired a multitude of retainers, who now thought themselves threatened by the King, and re-

garded their ancient protectors as a refuge from his power.

In this way the Guises enlisted the selfish feelings of the Estates, of the administration, of the judicial authority, and of the great magistrates, in a struggle against the Government, not only against its abuses, but even against its justifiable proceedings.

The most extraordinary feature of the case was that those who called themselves "the better and sounder portion of the nation," for that is the expression they use, should, at the same time that they took up arms for the restoration of France, enter into a confederacy with the ancient enemy of the kingdom. The attempt to establish the monarchy within, and to give it freedom of operation externally, however weak it might be—and its weakness was probably owing to its want of energy—must now come to an end. But the religious principle embraced everything, excused everything, and concealed all contradictions.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## THE RENEWED WAR AGAINST THE HUGUENOTS.

THE determinate character of this opposition left no room to expect any other result than an internecine struggle between the two parties.

Had Henry III. known the entire extent of the confederacy formed against him, there were no resource left him but to join with the Huguenots in the interior of the kingdom, to direct his efforts to the maintenance of the pacification, and to oppose with their aid the pretensions of the Guises; and, as regarded foreign affairs, to accept the offers of the Netherlanders, and to come to an open rupture with the King of Spain. When we consider that the ancient antipathy against the Spaniards, which had exhibited itself very vividly a short time before, might have been easily again enkindled; that even amongst the Catholics all were by no means of one mind with the Guises\*, especially the Bourbon

\* 'Commentarii delle cose successe nel Regno de Francia.'

princes of the blood, and a great part of the nobility, who felt a natural obligation towards the princes, or were accustomed to reside at the Court ; that there were in the middle estate many who held that a revolt on account of religion was not justifiable, and several who were old friends of the Guises, held back from them through conscientious scruples ; it will be seen that the King did not want the means for a great and decisive resistance.

But this required a man of different character,—more perspicacious and acute than the King, capable of resolving upon measures attended with danger, and inclined to war. Villeroy represented to him that he ought not on any account to allow before his eyes the rise of a faction which professed to be Catholic, and which placed the champions of Catholic ideas at its head. The King resolved rather to conclude a treaty with his enemies than to bring the matter to the arbitration of war.

It was his fate, and the fate of his whole house, ever to lose themselves and fall into confusion in the conflict of religious ideas with the power of the State, without being able to find the path that might have led them forth into safety.

The Guises, in their manifesto, had called on the Queen Mother, of whom they said that “ without her

MS. in the Grand-Ducal library at Carlsruhe : “ Parte de' Cattolici, aborrendo tal attione, come quella che pareva lor peccato di lesa maestà, si misero col Re e lo esortavano a far la guerra.”

wisdom the kingdom would long since have fallen to ruins," to avail herself of the present opportunity for its salvation, not without an intimation that she had now less share than she deserved in the management of affairs. The King himself committed the negotiations to her, and notwithstanding her age, her gout, and the cough by which she was shaken, she undertook the task. Catharine herself felt terrified at the prospect of Henry of Navarre's accession to the throne; she feared, as she said, that he would in that case cause her daughter, his consort, to be put to death, for the most contradictory elements had met in their union, and it is certain that Margaret was at that time set in opposition to her husband by the Leaguers\*. Had Catharine, when she broke with her son-in-law, actually the design in view of setting her grandson, the Prince of Lorraine, upon the throne? It does not appear with complete certainty, but she said to Henry Duke of Guise that she believed he would be the staff of her age†.

The Guises themselves were already not indisposed to an arrangement; the money sent them by

\* Letter of Guise to Philip II., asking for help: "Elle, que nous avons établie comme obstacle aux desseins de son mari, est instrument fort propre pour contraindre le Roi à la guerre."—Papers of Simancas.

† "Que havia de ser el bastion de su vejez, pues bien sabia, que á ningun estariar peor que el de Navarra fuese Rey, que á ella, porque havia luego matar á su hija."—Papers of Simancas.

Philip II. was soon expended, and it would have been very agreeable to them to be able to secure, amidst the tumultuous agitation which their rising had everywhere excited, the advantages which an accommodation offered to them.

The difficulties of Catharine's negotiation lay rather in the personal claims of the confederates than in their religious requisitions; they complained loudly of the favourites, and wished, if they could not overturn their authority, at least to secure themselves in the best manner against its influence.

The Queen succeeded so far in her diplomacy that it was not necessary to deliver up Metz to the Guises, as they had originally desired; but in other respects she made them some very important concessions. Verdun, Toul, St. Dizier, and Châlons were given up to the Duke of Guise; Soissons to the Cardinal of Bourbon; and the strong places in Burgundy, Brittany, and Picardy to Mayenne, Mercœur, and Aumale. All were permitted to maintain their own life-guards, and to pay them out of the income of the provinces. As the chiefs, so did their most distinguished followers obtain important personal advantages\*. An edict was issued, in which their armed rising was approved of, and described as agreeable to the King.

\* Articles accordés à Nemours au nom du Roi, 7 Juillet, 1585.  
(Mémoires de Nevers, which complete the Memoirs of the League,  
i. 688.)

The religious interests of the dispute appear much more as the principal object in this edict than they do in the manifesto. All the edicts of pacification previously issued are revoked, the surrender of the cautionary places conceded to the Huguenots demanded, and the mixed chambers abolished. The edict of July, 1585, goes still further than that issued in the year 1568 and after St. Bartholomew's Day. It forbids not only, like that, the exercise of any other religion than the Catholic, but it prohibits the Confession generally : "we have commanded, and command," it states, "that all who adhere to the new religion shall forsake the same, and within six months make confession of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, or, if they refuse to do so, that they depart from our kingdom and the lands within our allegiance." The most severe hierarchical laws, against which so long a struggle had been maintained, were renewed, and the simple confession of a variation of religious opinion from the Catholic standard threatened, as of old, with confiscation of goods and the pains of death. The King, in accordance with the requisition of the Guises, caused this edict to be registered in his own presence in the Parliament, July 28, 1585.

He was not opposed to it in his heart; not only in his youth had he given expression to similar principles, but also in later years in the Estates at Blois. It appeared to him also a great gain that

the whole kingdom should be brought back to religious unity. As in Blois all had been frustrated by the unwillingness of the Estates to grant the necessary pecuniary supplies for carrying on the war against the Huguenots, it now gave the King a secret pleasure to see them compelled by the movements of a faction to put forth all their power in efforts to provide for a similar war. He expressed this feeling with ironical humour on one occasion to the heads of the clergy and the deputies of the capital\*. All ideas of reform and economy were thrown aside under these circumstances ; the officers of finance purchased exemption from the investigation which had been commenced with large sums of money, the judicial offices which had been abolished were re-established, and fresh purchasers found for them†.

All was now in a state of preparation for war. The King of Navarre was very uneasy at this state of things. We may again call to mind the moment of extreme hopelessness which once possessed him.

King Henry III. did not concede everything yet in reference to him. He did not acknowledge that the King of Navarre could never ascend the throne ; but what the vivid feeling of legitimacy which he cherished would not permit him to concede was effected, and doubtless with far greater power, as

\* Speech in Dupleix, 'Histoire de Henry III.', 118.

† Pasquier, *Lettres*, liv. x. i. 9.

far as the faithful Catholics were concerned, by the agency of Rome. A formal process was instituted at Rome against the two Huguenot princes of the house of Bourbon, the King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé, on the authority of which Pope Sixtus V., who had just ascended the chair of St. Peter, issued the bull which astonished mankind. In this he declares the two princes not merely as heretics, but, as patrons and leaders of those who had relapsed once more to the crime of heresy, to have forfeited all their possessions, especially their claims upon the throne of France. This bull caused a discord between the new confederates. The Guises believed that they were bound to warn their friend Catharine de' Medici, as she was opening negotiations with Henry of Navarre, not to venture too near the abyss of excommunication. In case of any agreement which might yet take place between the two kings, they had, they told her, adopted a formal resolution at Orcamp to the effect that their religious duty relieved them from all the obligations of subjects\*.

The course of the affair itself however did not include the sole ground of misunderstanding; another arose from the connection of the Guises with Spain. Philip II. was by no means satisfied with the peace which had been hastily concluded by the

\* "Le devoir Chrétien les devoit transporter par dessus toute subjection," etc.—Bouillé, iii. 192.

Guises, especially as they had promised to renounce all foreign alliances. Weighing the most distant consequences as well as the immediate effects of this act, he perceived a possible danger should Henry succeed in subduing the Huguenots; for how easily could he in that case, with the power of his kingdom now become entirely Catholic, turn his arms against Spain! Philip II. urged Henry of Guise to give him an assurance that he would never bear arms against Spain, nay rather revolt from his King, should he at any time attack a Spanish territory, and the Duke actually allowed himself to be induced to give it. He declared that when he renounced all foreign alliances, he only meant such as might be injurious to the kingdom, not such as might contribute to its advantage like that with Spain\*.

Though promises of this kind were merely made in secret, they destroyed everything like unity of co-operation amongst the confederates. The existence of two distinct Catholic parties became daily more and more evident. The royalists were desirous of drawing over the legitimate successor to the throne and his adherents to their own creed, and to unite France in one religion, in that manner which would make the kingdom all the more powerful. The

\* "Que lo de las ligas rinunciadas se entendia de las que eran contra el reyno, y no desta que era en bien del y en servicio de Nuestro Señor, per lo qual la mantiendra siempre."

Leaguers desired to exclude the heir-presumptive under all conditions, to annihilate the Huguenots and to take possession of their estates. They held far more firmly by the idea of the universal church than they did by that of France, and were more attached to the King of Spain than to their own Sovereign.

The year 1586 was marked by various warlike enterprises\*, but the opposite views came into collision even in the Catholic armies. The King appointed subordinate commanders under the Duke of Mayenne, whom he never entirely trusted, and by whom he was never completely obeyed. The Duke of Guise endeavoured, where he commanded, to remove the royalist officers, and to surround himself with such as were implicitly devoted to him. The tactics of the Guises were observed to be vigorous and decided in such cases only as furthered their own interests. When it was necessary to recover a town which had fallen off from them, as in the case of Auxonne, or to obtain for themselves a fortress of which the Protestants had become masters, as in the case of Rocroy, their chief efforts were, in accordance with the King of Spain, directed against Sedan and Jamets. In the south of

\* Guise to Mendoza, February 3, 1586: "Et seroit nécessaire que le dit Mr. (Montmorency) s'alliat avec nous plustôt qu'avec le Roy même, afin que d'un commun accord nous puissions donner la loi."

France their object was more of a political than of a military kind : whilst they fought with the Duke of Montmorency in Languedoc, their intention was not so much to subdue him by force, which would have been to the advantage of the Crown, as to gain him over to their own views. United with him, they would, as they said themselves, be sufficiently strong to prescribe the law to the King himself.

But would Damville de Montmorency now unite with the ancient enemies of his house, and give up the design of bringing the adherents of both confessions to live together peaceably, which he had professed at the beginning ? He held firm by Henry of Navarre. The assault of the Catholics, however threatening it might have been at first, was of little importance in its results ; the Huguenots obtained possession of as many places as the Catholics did on their side.

The sympathy of the co-religionists in neighbouring lands gave the Huguenots better prospects for the ensuing year.

It was not a light matter however to put the military power of the Protestants in motion. Queen Elizabeth must be solicited to send a subsidy in money ; smaller sums were sent from the south of France to Switzerland, and from Rochelle to Hamburg, but they were seldom sufficient for the current necessities. But at the same time a more lively participation in the cause was exhibited. It

was not forgotten in Germany, and Joachim Frederick of Brandenburg, then administrator of Magdeburg, expressly brought it to remembrance, that the Empire was indebted for its religious peace to a King of France, who had taken up arms to assist in obtaining its establishment. It was generally looked upon as merely the fulfilment of a duty imposed by gratitude, now to send the French assistance from Germany, in order to secure for them a similar peace. The Huguenots, in fact, desired nothing more ardently ; Du Plessis Mornay said that the German army should be the midwife of the French peace ; but a Swiss army now joined the German auxiliaries, which had so often come to the aid of the French. The evangelical cantons were thrown into a state of the greatest agitation by the alliance between the Catholics and King Philip : in case the forces of the League should be victorious in France, they discerned not only a general danger, but also one that threatened themselves particularly. It thus happened that what had been always hitherto obviated through the ancient influence of the French crown upon the Swiss confederacy now took place. The magistracy of Berne, Zurich, Bâle, and Schaffhausen allowed in their territories enlistments\* in

\* That they allowed it, appears from all authentic papers; amongst others from the Memoirs of Sillery, 1587-1593, MS. at Berlin. It is there stated, "Ceux des cantons . . . s'étoient tellement oubliés que d'avoir permis à un grand nombre de leurs sujets à marcher," etc.

favour of the Huguenots. It was no longer mere single adventurers, but three great corps amounting to sixteen thousand men, which commenced their march towards the Palatinate, where they formed a junction with the German troops.

John Casimir, out of neighbourly respect for Lorraine, did not think it advisable on this occasion to lead the troops into the field himself, although the authority of his high rank and experience was greatly desired. He had in his service a Prussian nobleman, Fabian, Burgrave of Dohna, who had been introduced to him by Hubert Languet, and who had afterwards accompanied him in his journeys to the Netherlands and to England, as well as in his enterprise at Cologne, on behalf of Gebhard Fruchsess. The Burgrave was a man inspired with the general Protestant zeal, and not without a knowledge of arms, and to him the conduct of the campaign was committed. The army that pressed forward into Lorraine, under Dohna, comprised four thousand German cavalry, a few squadrons of *Landsknechte*, and three thousand five hundred French; united with the Swiss they formed a very considerable army.

Henry of Navarre without hesitation acknowledged this force as his own; for it appeared to him lawful to bring in foreign assistance against his enemies of Guise and Lorraine, whose object was to overturn and ruin the kingdom of France; he

believed it to be incumbent upon him to liberate the King of France from their power.

The intention of the King was now however by no means to allow himself to be thus liberated. He was conscious that there was truth in what Henry of Navarre advanced; for although he may not have comprehended the entire extent of the connection between the Guises and the Spaniards, yet he knew so much of it as that the former received Spanish money, and was perfectly aware that they contended for their own interests, not for his. So far Henry of Navarre appeared to him as his natural ally; but still he could not approve of his conduct in uniting himself independently with a foreign military force.

Henry III. still hoped to be able to subdue both,—to damp the ardour of the Huguenots, to coerce the Guises, and to carry into full execution his own Catholic and governmental ideas. He sent one of his favourites, Joyeuse, into the field against Henry of Navarre, intending to march himself against the approaching German and Swiss army. When he left Paris for this purpose, it was under the conviction that he was about to undertake a great task, fraught with infinite importance and difficulty. The Nuncio, in one of his reports, describes how the King rose from his bed, on the morning of his departure from the capital, and undressed as he was, threw himself upon his bare knees, and prayed for a long time; he then received the Eucharist; and,

thus prepared, under emotions of a religious nature, took the field.

This campaign has been called the war of the three Henrys for Henry III. Henry King of Navarre and Henry Duke of Guise each performed his own peculiar part in it.

The King of Navarre had the good fortune, with the small but experienced body that accompanied him, to obtain a complete victory over the splendid army which Joyeuse led against him on the plains of Coutras. Joyeuse himself was slain. This was the first battle won by the Huguenots during a quarter of a century of civil war; the young Prince of Navarre taught them at last to conquer in the open field. Whether he had not sufficient authority over them to retain them together, when they wished to return to their homes with the booty they had acquired, or whether it was owing to himself, that he did not more completely follow up his victory, is an old question, which we will not presume to decide.

*xx Costes*

King Henry III. took possession of both banks of the Middle Loire, in order to prevent the junction of the Swiss and German army with that of the Huguenots of the south of France. He was completely successful. Fabian Dohna allowed himself to be deceived by the splendid hopes held out to him, and to be led away from the passages across the Loire, which lay higher up; lower

down however he found the King. Proceeding constantly in a westerly direction, without meeting with any decided resistance;—for the skirmish at Vimory, where he and Mayenne met personally, is hardly worth mention,—but also without any success as far as Chartres; he was compelled at length to halt. King Henry III. had no intention of giving him battle, for these people would have fought with desperation; but he found other means to induce them to retreat. The enlistments were permitted in Switzerland chiefly on the ground that the troops, as it was averred, were not intended to act against the King, but against the Guises. Henry determined to make use of this principle to his own advantage. A Zurich captain\*, who served in the army, has described how the King first gave him to understand his astonishment at seeing Swiss confederates opposed to him, contrary to the perpetual peace and the firm alliance established between him and them; and how immediately the resolution was formed amongst the Swiss to convince the King of his error, and for this purpose to send delegates to him; and how these, when they made their obeisance to him, were much better instructed by him in the character of their

\* John Haller, whose manuscript chronicle in the town library at Zurich contains much that is in general new. According to a letter of Catharine de' Medici (November 8), the Swiss told the King, “que leurs piques ne piqueront ni leurs espées ne trancheront jamais contre le Roi.”

expedition. The King declared that it was not in his favour, but against him. He said it to them himself,—he, the King. He was no phantom, he stood before them. They answered that they carried neither halbert nor sword against the crown of France. When the delegates returned to the camp, they imparted to the other leaders the change which had taken place in their views. Not one of them would have anything to do with an enterprise against the French crown. They accepted money from the King; and thus had he the merit of putting an end to this irruption—which was as much dreaded in Paris as if it had been a new Helvetic immigration—in the very midst of its career, and without striking a blow.

Meanwhile it was the good fortune of the Duke of Guise to acquire the superior honour of the transaction. The relation in which he stood to the King was one of the most extraordinary character. It is certain that Henry III. wished to appear as strong as possible in the field, not only for the purpose of meeting the enemy, but also because he wanted to reduce Guise to his proper subordinate position by his own presence\*. It is equally certain that Guise was supported by the Spaniards, in order that he might be able to maintain his posi-

\* "Che (il Re) volea per due fini presso di se il nervo maggiore: uno per sicurezza in ogni evento, qualor dovesse combattere; l'altro per tener in soggezione il Guisa, quando pur rima-

tion in presence of the King of France\*. They gave him money for the express purpose of strengthening him in his opposition to the King, and for enabling him to satisfy his friends.

They might be compared with Bomilcar and Hanno, or with two Roman consuls who, cherishing a mutual and deadly hatred, yet fight against the same enemy, were not their case rendered still more peculiar by the fact that here one of the two was king, whilst the other was only a governor and military leader.

Up to the present time Guise had not effected much against the enemy. Now however the effect of the royal declaration upon the Swiss troops suggested to the Burgrave the idea of marching with his army to attack Guise, against whom the Swiss felt no scruples in fighting. He hoped to defeat Guise in open battle, as Joyeuse had been defeated by Henry of Navarre. At the same moment Guise, who was eager for battle, and who better understood the nature of men and things in the country, set himself in motion to meet his enemy.

Dohna had the good-natured folly not to take

nesse per ventura vincitore degli Alemanni."—Tempesti, *Vita di Sisto V.*, i. 320.

\* "Volebat Parmensis iis auxiliis conservari et unionem *et* Guisios," Tassis, *Commentarii*, 477. Tassis was then again in the Netherlands, and shows himself much better informed concerning the affairs of the Netherlands than he does concerning the events which had taken place in France.

military possession of the castle commanding the little town of Auneau, in which he took up his quarters one evening. Guise won over the commander with money and promises, and induced him to open the castle during the night. In the morning, when Dohna was preparing to resume his march, whilst the cavalry were either at their breakfast or engaged in accoutring their horses, and the streets were filled with baggage-waggons, Guise rushed from the castle. They were unable to collect more than a single company; the rest were surprised in their quarters, and either cut down upon the spot or made prisoners\*. The Burgrave saved himself with his banner, and made every effort to collect the cavalry and Swiss out of the neighbouring quarters, for an attempt to retake the town, but he was far from possessing sufficient authority to effect his purpose. The Swiss would not now fight even against Guise, and drew over some of the German captains and their troopers to join them in their design of marching homewards. Thus, in increasing confusion and want of counsel, and assailed on both sides by the royal troops and by those under the command of Guise, the invading army commenced its retreat along the Loire. They despaired of being

\* According to Leuthinger (*De Marchiâ*, lib. xxiv. 528), Buch was also in the village. Vossius (*De Rebus Gestis Fabiani à Dohna*) expresses himself rather in an apologetic than in a narrative manner: p. 65.

able to join the Huguenots, and at last gave ear to the exhortations of the King, that they should leave the kingdom. He was well pleased to see them depart, and offered no obstruction, satisfied with the promises they had given never again to bear arms against him. The French who might desire to separate from them he permitted to remain in the country, under the proviso that they should submit to the edict which had been issued on the subject of religion.

In this manner the army returned from the field. The consequences of the campaign were so far important, that the Protestant German force was driven beyond the boundaries of the kingdom, pursued, and almost annihilated by Guise, who gave little heed to any capitulation. As regarded the French domestic question, it decided nothing. The government of the favourites was not abandoned. Epernon maintained his old and hated superiority, whilst the victory of Coutras had strengthened the feeling of self-dependence in the Huguenots. Guise's thoroughly open opposition prevented the King from undertaking anything decisive against Henry of Navarre. When pressed to do so, he constantly answered that Navarre was not his worst enemy; he required that every one should obey him.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## THE BARRICADES.

In this conjuncture a hostility of the most formidable description manifested itself against the King in the very midst of his capital. The Catholic union had here assumed a new and alarmingly threatening aspect.

In the beginning of the year 1587 the intelligence of warlike preparations in Germany had excited all men's minds. It was said that an army of three hundred thousand heretics were summoned to take arms, and that they were about to invade France in order to annihilate the good Catholics, and that the hypocritical King was in secret a party to the enterprise. The idea was suggested that the Catholic princes alone were too weak to meet such a danger, and that a civic organization should be grounded in order to support them. A rich citizen, who was in the service of the Bishop of Paris, Charles Hottmann by name, was the first, as far as is

known, who originated this notion\*. He imparted it to a few preachers whose popular eloquence gave them great power, the chief of whom were Jean Prevost, Matthieu Launay, and Jean Boucher. They seized the idea with joy, and proceeded immediately to carry it into effect. According to the information despatched to Rome, the new and as yet not numerous confederacy took shape on the 25th of January and the 2nd of February, 1587. Sixteen men were first appointed, according to the number of quarters into which the city of Paris was then divided, each of whom was to conduct the affairs of the association in his own department. Ten more were then named, amongst whom were the four originators of the scheme, and who were to have the general management of the proceedings. No one was to be received as a member of the confederacy without their consent. The union progressed rapidly, in consequence probably of its absorbing the elements of one whom had been previously formed in the year 1576, as well as through the influence of the better and more affluent middle class, to which Hottmann himself belonged. The chief obligation under which the members laid themselves was to pay into the funds of the union as much money as the Council of Ten should assess†.

\* " Avea sentito susurreare, che venisse contra Francia un esercito di trecento mila eretici, risolsi di unire insieme altrettanti Francesi Cattolici."—Anonymo Capitolino.

† The "association faite particulièrement par aucun bourgeois

Henry of Guise comprehended, at the first word spoken to him concerning this confederacy, what a powerful instrument it offered to his hand for any enterprise. In a short time Mayenne came to the city, and in the most profound secrecy effected an understanding with the citizens, who almost regarded it as an honour that the great nobles were willing to unite with them. An alliance was formed, with the twofold object of extirpating all heresy in France, and of abolishing the abuses of the judicial system. Those who held similar principles in other cities and towns, were to be invited to concur in the movement.

Even in the very beginning of their proceedings—that is in the month of March, 1587—the idea was broached of deciding the whole matter at once by seizing the person of the King. It was intended to remove the favourites, and to compel him to adopt unconditionally the policy of the League. They did not however succeed in their design, whether it was that the King was warned in time, or that affairs were not yet ripe for the attempt.

de Paris," of which mention is made in the records of the States of Blois, 1576, Des Etats Généraux, xiii. 271. According to Doschius, 'Vita Francisci Hottomanni,' the family of Hottmann, which showed itself so active on both sides, came originally from Breslau. Lambert, the founder of the family, had two sons,—John, who contributed greatly to obtain the funds required for the ransom of ~~Charles I.~~, and Peter, who held office in the administration. Francis Hottmann was son of the latter, Charles Hottmann was grandson of the former.

*Francis?* w.i.

For some time the concealed and extensive union, which embraced an innumerable multitude, manifested itself merely in popular opposition.

There was a demagogue named Roland, who displayed his zeal chiefly against the peace with the Huguenots, and indulged generally in the fiercest language. When he was arrested, the League, both princes and citizens, resolved that they would not allow him to suffer any damage, and between them they compelled the Government to liberate him\*. Another person, on the contrary, who had written against the League and the Papal Bull, remained in prison.

Master Prevost placed upon the church of St. Severin a picture representing the cruelties practised against the Catholics in England, which set the people in a rage “against the Huguenots and the Politicians.” The Government caused the picture to be removed. The act was replied to by placards of the most offensive character, and from the pulpits, which thundered with constantly increasing vehemence. An attempt to imprison one of these preachers, in September, 1587, aroused the quarters in which it was made to a general insurrection.

In this disposition of the city, all the intelligence that arrived from the field was received with contempt for the King and admiration for the Duke.

\* Compare Guise's letter, in Bouillé, 211, with L'Etoile, of June 4, 1517.

To him the people ascribed the salvation of the city. His most trifling achievements were made the subjects of ballads, printed on flying sheets, and listened to with enthusiasm; but the surprise of Auneau appeared an extraordinary action. He was celebrated by the preachers as the Gideon of faithful France; they applied the words of Scripture to him, "Saul has slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands." It was held to be shameful, a species of treason, in the King, to come to a convention with the enemy, for it was owing to him alone that all these robbers had not been cut to pieces. But it was clearly evident that he had invited them at first, paid them for coming, and now sent them back again\*.

The King, who had really performed the decisive part in the campaign, and expected to receive honour for it, was astounded that the public voice should thus declare against him. The reception he met with on his return was cold, and the *vive-le-roi's* with which he was greeted were purchased. Soon after his arrival in the capital he was induced to summon the insurrectionary preachers before himself, and to make known to them his displeasure and contempt; Pope Sixtus, he told them, would have sent them to the galleys for similar behaviour; but that he would forgive them for this time, but advised them

\* L'Etoile, beginning of December, 1587: edition of Champollion, 234.

to amend\*. He saw the storm brewing round him. Did he fear to bring it to an outbreak? or did he believe it possible to allay it by admonition?

The Duchess of Montpensier, *née* Guise, sister of Duke Henry, gave the preachers special encouragement. She boasted that she was able to effect more by their tongues than her brother could by his troops. The King showed her his displeasure, but he suffered her to remain in the capital.

The Carnival of 1588 was observed under these circumstances, and the city occupied and filled with careless and scandalous enjoyments, as if there were no League, no enemy of the kingdom in France. There was not an individual at the Court of whom the most shameful things were not repeated; all there was in a state of hostility and common antagonism.

“Distrust,” said the Papal nuncio, “has crept into the council, the house, the very chamber of the King; no one is trusted except those with whom people are connected by the most intimate personal interests; every one seeks to deceive his neighbour, and then laughs at him. Even the Queen Mother could not maintain whatever remains of credit she possesses, in opposition to the ruling favourite Epernon.” One day Epernon paid her a visit, and knelt before her with his head uncovered; she

\* L’Etoile: “Il en demeurait là; habens quidem animum, sed non satis animi.”

begged earnestly that he would rise, but he remained fixed and obstinate in his position, until he had informed her that he had never done and never contemplated anything adverse to her\*. I do not believe that he either persuaded or convinced her.

Meanwhile fresh dissensions, having reference to possessions and authority, sprang up between the King and the Guises.

The government of Normandy was vacated by the death of Joyeuse : Guise, supported by his friends, and relying upon his merit, demanded it for himself ; the King transferred it to Epernon.

The government of Picardy was also vacated by the death of Condé, who was believed to have died of poison at St. Jean d'Angely : the Guises demanded it for Aumale ; the King handed it over to the Duke of Nevers.

Queen Catharine at this moment showed herself somewhat inclined to the party of the Guises, and is said to have approved of a serious enterprise against the King of Navarre† ; but all her good counsel on that subject was steadily resisted by her

\* Morosini, in Tempesti, *Vita di Sisto V.*, i. 380.

† According to a rumour then widely circulated, "la Reine desseignoit de faire tomber la couronne entre les mains des enfans de sa fille de Lorraine. M. de Guise n'y étoit employé que comme serviteur de M. de Lorraine."—*Mémoires Singuliers*, in Egerton, 297. I have found no proofs of this sufficient to remove all doubt ; I therefore will not assert it, but I cannot altogether reject it.

son, and at last they came to an open breach in regard to it. Henry III. reproached his mother with the evil consequences of her former proposals, and told her at last that he wished for the future to act according to his own views, and begged her never again to meddle in his affairs\*.

This was a remarkable, but at the same time a necessary turn of circumstances. The first rising of the Guises had rekindled the King's old anti-Protestant zeal, but it had also aroused his dislike towards them, and this dislike had been increased and strengthened by everything that had since occurred until it had at last become almost his ruling passion. He was in that condition that he was obliged to show favour to those against whom he was engaged in war, and to dread those who stood upon his side.

As the mediation of the Queen Mother was now also at an end, the state of things assumed daily a more and more threatening aspect. The Guises presented obstacles to Epernon's taking possession of the government in Normandy. They refused to admit royal garrisons in Picardy. In both provinces they had a large party; in the latter the entire nobility were on their side. The King caused Au-

\* One of the best-informed authorities is Morosini, the Nuncio, afterwards Legate, excerpts from whose despatches are given by Temposti; according to him Henry said, "Essendo io risolitissimo di voler fare e disfare, sensa consigli, la prego a non volersi più ingerire in questi affari," i. 373.

male to be summoned to receive the royal garrisons in Picardy, and to quit the province, with the threat that if he did not obey, the King himself would come and cast his head at his feet\*. Aumale replied, "that if he were to be forgotten, as well as his father, who had fallen in battle before the King's eyes, he had still heart enough and friends sufficient to defend both his life and honour."

The Nuncio had already informed the Pope of the increasing danger of a war among the Catholics themselves. The ladies of the Palace remarked, that the whole affair might have a tragical issue.

On their side the confederate nobles assembled first at Nancy, in the palace of the Duke of Lorraine, and afterwards at Soissons, in just as hostile an attitude as ever. The contempt with which they regarded the proposals of the King may be seen from a letter of Guise to the Spanish ambassador. "He is determined not to allow the Picards to be injured further than by threats, and not even this shall they have to bear ; the King shall not have travelled far from Paris, when he (Guise) will so order matters, that he will be compelled to return again†." A manifesto immediately appeared, in which the old demands of the religious and political

\* "Altrimenti sarebbe egli andato in persona con tutte le forze, per gettarli la testa a piedi."—From the reports of the Nuncio, in Tempesti, i. 390.

† "Si le Roy part de Paris, je le feray plustôt penser à revenir qu'il n'aura approché les Picards d'une journée :" in Bouillé, iii. 260.

opposition were advanced afresh. It appeared as if the confederates themselves intended to come to Paris, in order to present it with the greater publicity.

During these proceedings, the fermentation in the capital increased daily. There is nothing in the world blinder than the suspicion, so wise in its own eyes, which interprets all that happens in accordance with preconceived opinions. The city had not the most distant idea of the peculiar position of Henry III. in reference to the Guises. The people regarded him who had formed an alliance with a foreign king, and one opposed to French interests, as a defender; whilst the King, who had at least preserved the honour of France, they looked upon as a traitor and an enemy.

In April, as a preacher, who had delivered rebellious harangues, was about to be brought before the King, or probably to be put in prison, an armed mob assembled with the determination to prevent it. This resistance might without doubt have been suppressed, but the Court avoided violent measures, thinking it better to occasion no further alarm. This advantage however gave the members of the League still greater confidence. Much was said to the King of the military organization of the city in its five quarters, each of which had its own leader\*.

\* Procès Verbal de M. Poulain, at the end of the 'Journal de L'Etoile'; Petitot, xlvi. 434. This is the Polledro of Davila, and

Upon the declaration of the Parisians, that they were strong enough, and prepared for any enterprise, and that they wanted nothing further, except the presence of Guise, he answered that they should not have long to wait for him. The city was now filled with men of suspicious appearance. The civic authorities made one attempt to remove persons of that description, but they found it impracticable.

The King was now in the greatest embarrassment. Should he leave the city, it would be lost to him; whilst by remaining in it, his authority, if not his personal safety, would be endangered. He resolved to bring into the suburbs of St. Denis and St. Martin a detachment of the Swiss and French guards, who were quartered in the neighbourhood. He counted upon finding a moderate party amongst the citizens, who adhered to the chief magistrate, the *Prévôt des Marchands*, and amongst whom were a few of the trainband captains. The question which occupied all men's minds did not refer so much to the dispute between the Huguenots and the Catholics, as to the opinions of the Catholics themselves concerning the position they occupied in regard to the Huguenots. The one party insisted that the heretics should be exterminated.

the Polinius of De Thou, who plays so important a part in the writings of this historian. The credibility of his statements has been always disputed, but that they are authentic has never been questioned.

nated with fire and sword,—that the Church principle was the foundation, which should be maintained by all and unconditionally. The others answered that that would result in the destruction of the country, and the ruin of the State, upon the order of which everything rested. This matter was spoken of in all companies, and where men came together in larger numbers it became the subject of debate. The King, driven for a moment from his usual policy, returned to it again, and appeared as if he wished to lean upon that moderate party which had been named Politicians; but upon this very point arose the excitement of the popular confederacy. A rumour was spread abroad that the King wished to make the Politicians masters of the city, and to expel the members of the League, nay to arrest the most distinguished and best affected of the citizens; a list of those who were said to be devoted to destruction was circulated from hand to hand. To the religious and political passions of the people was now added apprehension for their own lives; and, if it had not been done previously, the Duke of Guise was now requested to come to the capital and protect the true Catholics, his adherents.

Duke Henry of Guise, like the King, was the son of an Italian mother; they had grown up together, and, like their mothers, had been united with each other in good and evil, but the nature of the

Duke had taken a development altogether different from that of the King. The Italians could not sufficiently admire the harmonious union of mental energy and corporeal vigour which was displayed in Henry Guise. On one occasion he was seen to swim against the current of a stream in complete armour. In the game of tennis, in pugilism, and all military exercises, he was unrivalled, and no hardship seemed to fatigue him\*. He was a tall and fine-looking man, with fair flowing hair and lively piercing eyes; his countenance was not disfigured by a scar on one of his cheeks, the relics of a wound received in battle,—it seemed rather to increase his soldierly appearance; in the judgement of many he presented the very type of a man. Although brought up in the lap of luxury, he cheerfully put up with the privations and difficulties of the camp. We read nothing of great campaigns conducted by him, but he was a courageous and gallant captain, and successful in many daring adventures. He did not think long consultations and reflection necessary, for in war he believed that everything depended upon rapid execution. Under the impression of concurring intelligence, perhaps at table, in the midst of a numerous company,

\* Description by an Italian who knew him, from a collection of letters in the Library at Stuttgart, No. 181: "Di temperamento giovale, benigno, grave, attraeva la gente di amarlo e di seguirlo." Compare Davila.

he would form his plan, from the accomplishment of which he would not afterwards allow himself to be diverted by any objection. As he was willing to share in the pains and labours of his soldiers, so was he also desirous of dividing with them his rewards and honours. In a poetic eulogy, the artist who painted his portrait is asked why he had not given him a laurel wreath around his brows. The poet himself answers his own question on behalf of the painter, by saying that the Duke would have plucked off the leaves and distributed them to his companions in arms. He never forgot either who he was or what he wished to be ; but he avoided every appearance of overweening arrogance. His letters, of which many remain, are redolent of Italian courtesy. He condescended even to those of the lowest rank, and seldom refused an invitation to a baptism, a wedding, or any other domestic festivity. He had been seen to cross the street, hat in hand, to salute an acquaintance, sometimes of mean condition. In a company of hundreds he distinguished, at the first glance, those of them with whom he had a particular connection, and could let them know, by a movement of the eye or a turn of the head, that he recognized them. In short, he possessed that quality which attaches men more than anything else,—carelessness for himself, combined with attention to others. He was also generous, though far from being rich. Let us figure to ourselves a man pos-

sessed of these qualities, and, at the same time, of illustrious descent and exalted rank, in the midst of an excited multitude, whose most passionate feelings he shared in hatred against the professors of another creed. How could it otherwise be than that all should cling to him? King Henry III. once said that it was true he wore the crown, but that Guise was the king of minds\*.

There is no doubt that Guise's conduct, if conformable to his nature, was, at the same time, calculated for the production of such effects; for Henry Guise was, in his most distinguishing characteristics, a party chief. He united in himself, as men even then observed, the heroic qualities of his father and the subtlety of his uncle.

Of the manifold motives which determined him at any time in a particular course, he knew just as well as his uncle how to present those which were most consonant with the dispositions of those with whom he was treating. The others he reserved even from his most confidential friends,—his own brothers could not extract them from him. His word or promise was not to be relied upon. We have seen through what a miserable subterfuge he considered himself relieved from the stipulations of the treaty of Nemours. He was not fond of regular

\* According to Morosini, it was once said to King Henry III.,  
“ Egli (il Duca di Guisa) è il Re nell' affetto, se la M. V. è Re  
nell' effetto.”

preparation, even in political affairs ; he was at home in disorder and tumult ; and looked for all success as the result of his popularity and his star.

He obtained a certain superiority over the King by the fact that the latter, whilst prince, had belonged to the same party ; that they had borne arms together against the Huguenots ; prepared together for St. Bartholomew's Day ; and that the League of 1576 was their work in common. The King had since adopted another policy, and while Guise set himself in opposition to it he retained a certain sympathy in the King's early reminiscences, and in the strict Church-maxims he had formerly recognized, and from which Henry III. could not emancipate himself. In the Duke, on the other hand, all was consistent—his descent, conviction, party position, religious and political objects.

The contention between them had been enkindled afresh. Guise had offered conditions to the King, the acceptance of which would have fully secured the superiority of his party in France. He had also demanded the dismissal of the favourite, who had just departed for Normandy in order to take possession of the government of that province. Guise was, in short, resolved to carry out his own designs. The King had given him an express intimation not to come to Paris ; upon the requisition of the city, in the apparent pressure of the conjuncture, as well as from apprehension and ambition,

the Duke resolved to pay no attention to this prohibition, and appeared in the capital on the 9th of May, 1588; his attendance was small, but he did not require a greater.

He alighted at the palace of the Queen Mother, with whom he was not without some connection. Catharine, who saw at one view all the consequences of his arrival, trembled as she gazed on him. She asked what had brought him to Paris so unexpectedly; he answered, with some warmth, that he had heard there was a design in contemplation to surprise the Catholics and destroy them in one night, and that he had come to defend them, or else to die with them. It has been said that he expressed himself in a similarly disrespectful manner to the King; but the most credible reports contain no proof of his having done so. Henry III. saw Guise, for the first time after his return, in the apartment of the Queen Consort, and, collecting himself for the effort, he spoke chiefly of Epernon, who he said was his friend, and therefore had claims upon the friendship of the Duke of Guise. The Duke replied, that Epernon must first learn to acknowledge the difference which existed between them both, in nature as well as birth, and afterwards they might be friends\*. Those who saw the

\* This is the report of the Nuncio to Sixtus V. It is as a version grounded upon distinguished evidence at least, and possesses in itself the greatest probability.

King and the Duke together would never have suspected that there existed between them a feeling of discord, which was so soon to break out with violence. Even as late as the 11th of May Guise fulfilled his office of Lord Steward of the Household at the supper-table with all the duty and observance of a contented subject.

Uneasiness and apprehension increased however, each successive moment, through the arrival of zealous and authoritative members of the League, such as the Archbishop Espinac of Lyons, as well as through the boundless popularity which Guise enjoyed. On one occasion an old woman forced her way through the crowd, and told him that she was now willing to die, since God had vouchsafed her the grace of seeing, with her own eyes, the preserver of the faithful. A tiler, at the risk of his life, jumped down from the roof of a house upon which he was at work, in order to have a nearer view of the Duke, who was passing in the street below. What would have been the consequence if the address of Soissons had been presented under these circumstances, and Guise had undertaken to be the interpreter of the general desire? How could the King have ventured to offer any resistance? the universal voice would have overpowered him.

I do not find that Guise had any further object immediately in view, or that he contemplated the employment of force. The King was also far

from being disposed to such a course. But the presence of so many strangers of equivocal position and character, and the doubtful fidelity of the civic militia,—a division of which had abandoned an important post without orders,—suggested to the Council, at a sitting held on the 11th of May, in which Catharine de' Medici took no part, the resolution to bring the French and Swiss troops, which were quartered in the suburbs, into the city. But where such hostile elements come into contact, there is soon no authority that can prevent a collision and the shedding of blood. The troops consisted of eleven Swiss companies and nine French. On the morning of the 12th of May they marched through the gates with fifes and drums, and took possession of the Halles, the Place de Grève, and the bridges and streets round the Louvre, and in the Cité. They also occupied the posts which had been deserted by the citizens. Altogether, with those which were already in the city, the troops might have amounted to about six thousand men. It is amazing that any one could have dreamt of overpowering with so small a force a city filled with armed burghers. Paris had at that time probably half a million of inhabitants\*. The arrival of these

\* Bernardino Mendoza, in a letter written during the siege of 1590, states that the usual number of inhabitants amounted to five hundred and fifty thousand souls, but that they had then been reduced to four hundred thousand.

soldiers however made the impression that the real truth was that “ more than a hundred honourable citizens were condemned to death, and that the hangman’s assistants were already in the city to complete their execution ; that should the slightest resistance be offered they would break into the houses and abuse the inhabitants, whilst the women would be given up to the brutality of the Swiss soldiers\*.” The population collected in their several quarters round their flags, and a few captains who remained faithful to the King were forsaken by their people. Large crowds took possession of the streets, in order to resist the advance of the royal troops. The tumult increased, the civic authorities in favour of the royal cause were expelled, and others appointed in their room who shared the views and feelings of the majority. The conduct of the whole fell into the hands of a few of the most resolute members of the League. Amongst these no one exercised a

\* Of the three earliest reports, ‘Audacieuse Entreprise de M. de Guise,’ ‘Amplification des Particularités que se passèrent à Paris’ (*Mém. de la Ligue*, ii. 308–315), and ‘Histoire très-véritable de ce qui est avenu dans cette ville de Paris’ (*Preuves de la Satire Menippée*, i. 40), the last-named contains the best information: it has been supposed to be from the pen of St. Yon, one of the Echevins attached to the principles of the League. Yet the numbers from 76 to 83, in which he is mentioned, are manifest insertions. They break the connection of the narrative by suddenly passing over the Friday and then again returning to the events of Thursday. St. Yon is at most but the editor, not the author.

more powerful influence upon the course of the affair than Count Charles of Brissac, the son of that Brissac of Piedmont of whom it was said that he was a lion, and led a troop of lions into battle. The younger Brissac had been neglected by Henry III., and now wished to prove to him his importance by opposing him. He took his position at the head of the armed citizens in the Quartier Latin, where the students from the University joined him. The royal troops, on the other hand, took post on the Place Maubert, under the command of the brave Crillon, who, had he been allowed to act according to his own judgement, would probably have gained the superiority over the citizens. He had however received peremptory orders not to fire; and as leave was not given him at the critical moment, he retired. A plan had long since been formed by the citizens to defend the streets with barricades, as in earlier years they had been defended with chains,—a plan which had often been attempted elsewhere in the fury of civil war. As far as we know, Guise himself was not for having recourse to this extreme measure. Brissac, as he asserted, ordered all and conducted its execution. There is no doubt that he erected at least the first barricade at the opening of the Rue Galande into the Place from which Crillion had retreated\*. The same was done in a

\* + El papel, que dio el agente de M. de Brissac, in the Archives of Simancas, contains these words: "Le Comte de Brissac, contre

moment in all the neighbouring quarters, and with the most decisive results. By midday the troops were everywhere effectually separated from one another, shut up within barricades, and the citizens masters universally. Marshal Biron, the commander of the troops, said even then to the King that each street was a town, which must be conquered. Biron, with a few attendants, went on foot up to one of the great barricades in order to speak of peace. There however, when he would not concede the demands made, he found the arms of the citizens pointed at himself. The demand of the mob was the total removal of all the troops, and again it was Brissac who commenced hostile operations to compel them to yield. At the head of the armed men of the Place Maubert, he commanded the Swiss to extinguish their matches, and when they refused commenced an attack on them in front, and in the rear from the Rue St. Jacques\*. The Swiss immediately exhibited their rosaries in their outstretched hands, to show that they were Catholics, began to beg for quarter in their broken French, and allowed themselves to be disarmed; the same took place on the Marché Neuf; and the populace rushed at the

*l'opinion de feu M. de Guise, dressa les barricades avec les gentilshommes et le peuple de Paris, et dégarnit cinq ou six milles hommes de guerre... qu'il confesse être arrivés comme par miracle."*

\* "Jamais on ne vit chose mieux conduite, ny plus heureusement succéder."—*Lettres d'Et. Pasquier, liv. xii. p. 334.*

sound of the tocsin upon the troops in all the posts which they occupied. The King, in order to save them, gave orders that they should all assemble round the Louvre; but this was not to be accomplished so easily, he was himself compelled to solicit the aid of his enemy Guise.

Guise had made preparations for defence in his palace on the same morning. The garden was filled with arms, and the ground-floor occupied by persons prepared for battle. In the courtyard his friends belonging to the nobility formed themselves into ranks, desirous of the opportunity to fight for him\*.

By midday the idea of an attack was entirely abandoned. Guise was seen traversing the nearest streets in company with the Archbishop Espinac, in the midst of a double line formed by the mob. From time to time intelligence was brought to him from the central parts of the city, and the joy with which he received these accounts showed that he was confident of victory†.

\* Luigi Davila found him thus when he had been sent to him by the Queen, and he himself showed him his preparations. (Davila, *Historia*, 496.)

† Young Augustus de Thou, the historian, saw him under these circumstances: "Mihi videri in vultu Guisii ac suorum eam fiduciam et serenitatem oris cernere," etc., lib. 91. iii. 187. The palace is the present Hôtel des Archives. It had formerly belonged to the Constable de Clisson, from whom it was purchased in 1553 by Guise's mother; it passed into the possession of the Prince of Soubise afterwards.

Already however all was decided. Appealed to for assistance by the Court itself, he went at once to the scene of the struggle. He was on horseback, but without his cuirass or any arms, except a staff which he carried in his hand. Wherever he showed himself the uproar was immediately stilled. He first liberated the French guards from the house into which they had been forced ; then the Swiss from the Marché Neuf, and afterwards all the others. They were now able, under the guidance of Guise and his friends, to assemble round the Louvre. Through all this however no trace of arrogance or insolence was noticeable in his behaviour ; he only complained that people should have given him this trouble, saying that those who kindled the fire should in all reason extinguish it. He did not even show any ill-will towards his antagonists, but treated them with that admirable courtesy which was peculiar to him. The danger and the victory were in truth equally unexpected by him.

It was thought in the city that all was now accomplished, and that Guise would for the future rule next to the King. The King was counselled to go through the streets in company with the governor of the city, the Duke, and perhaps his mother, and endeavour to persuade the people to remove the barricades. He could not however bring himself to take a step in which he would have to experience at the same moment the power of the detested party

chief and the scorn of the multitude ; nor could he be certain that things would remain in the state at which they had now arrived. It was told the King that Brissac had once more collected an armed crowd in the neighbourhood of the University, with the intention of seizing the only gate in the King's possession—that next to the Louvre, and most probably of making an attack on that palace\*. Must he at length fall into the hands of his enemies ? He finally determined to use the moment whilst the keys of this single gate—the Porte Neuve—still remained in his hands, and his opponents had not yet appeared before the Louvre, and to quit the city. Accompanied by the courtiers and councillors who had the means of taking horse, he set out and took the road to Chartres.

Thus did this momentous event take place with but a trifling contest. The population of the city, which had once thrust out the Huguenots, and afterwards, incited by the Court, so horribly butchered those who ventured among them, now turned their arms against the King himself. The prince who had helped to provoke the fury of St. Bartholomew's

\* "Ho saputo," said the King to the Nuncio, "che il Sr. de Brissac raunava gente nell' Università di scolari per muoversi il palazzo regio et impradonirsi della Porta Nuova, onde io rimaneva assediato et in potere di miei nemici, nelle mani di quali era risoluto di non cadere :" the Porte Neuve was between the Louvre and the Tuilleries, not far from the quay. (Dulaure, Hist. de Paris, v. 45.)

Day, saw, when king, the popular passions directed against himself, saw his troops disarmed, and himself compelled to fly beyond the walls of his capital.

He was as good a Catholic as any of them. He had, as he once said, done more for the prosperity of the city than any ten of his predecessors taken together. But benefits received are soon forgotten; they bind none but those who have inborn feelings of gratitude, and least of all the multitude, among which, though they attain in the mass a flourishing condition, still each feels only in his own case what is still wanting to him. Partly through his own fault, and partly through that of others, the King had lost his personal authority; but he came into hostile collision with popular opinion chiefly through his tolerant policy and his efforts to establish peace. The rigid Catholic element, once aroused, victorious, and independent, now strove to obtain unconditional dominion. It deemed itself to possess an ecclesiastical and political right to an exclusive existence in France. That the King was compelled to take other measures against the partisan efforts of a powerful house and the influences of a foreign power, was not considered by the multitude; impelled forward by the fanatical preachers who ruled their party, they felt nothing, suspected nothing, but blindly followed their Guise, who was all the while in the pay of the Spaniard.

Had Henry remained in Paris, even had no worse

results followed, he would have been compelled to govern in accordance with the views of the city and of the victor. Now that he had saved himself, and was acknowledged as king in the country, negotiation at least was still possible.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

## THE ESTATES OF BLOIS, 1588.

THE deliberations of the Estates, for the assembling of which at Blois, towards the close of the year 1588, the King caused the letters of summons to be immediately issued, can only be regarded as negotiations.

The King held it to be necessary previously, as it were, to adopt the notions of his adversaries, and to submit himself to them. In a new edict, promulgated in July, 1588\*, he promises to destroy heresy, and requires from his subjects an obligation upon oath that after his death they will never accept for their king any one who shall be a heretic, or a favourer of heretics. He required another oath from them in addition, by which they were to pledge themselves to abstain from all other alliances and connections, whether within the kingdom or in fo-

\* *Edit du Roi sur l'union de ses sujets Catholiques : Mémoires de la Ligue*, ii. 366. Articles accordés au nom du Roi, ib. iii. 52.

reign countries. He would not hear the word League any longer; under the term union he understood the legal connection and alliance between the Catholic subjects of the realm and their Catholic king. He so far controlled himself in this preliminary proclamation as to announce an amnesty for what had taken place in Paris. Favours were even bestowed upon Guise; and when he came to the Court he was received in a gracious manner. Epernon lost his new government, and was removed, and the whole Council was dismissed, because it appeared indissolubly associated with the previous political administration of affairs. All questions were to be freely investigated in the Assembly of the Estates, and new forms of government decided upon.

When the Estates assembled at Blois in October, the King flattered himself that the free elections would have brought together in the Assembly men who were not connected with the League, and who would lend a willing ear to his representations. I know not that ever a French king delivered a more remarkable discourse than that with which Henry III. opened these Estates. It was animated throughout with a feeling that an understanding in the Catholic sense, as well as in accordance with the monarchy and the Estates, was still practicable by means of consultation.

Henry III. commenced with a eulogy upon his

mother, who sat upon the highest step immediately below the throne. He promised again to oppose heresy, even at the risk of his life, as he had done before in battle; he could not find a prouder grave than amidst the ruins of heresy. He promised, in addition, a searching reform in reference to the finances as well as in the appointment to official places, for he said that his honour depended upon the prosperity of his subjects and the welfare of the kingdom. Some of the abuses complained of he declared to be abolished on the spot. He conjured the Estates to unite with him for the purpose of putting an end to all disorder, by the memory of the ancient kings his predecessors, by whom they had been happily and mildly governed, and by the name of true Frenchmen, who always passionately reverenced their natural and legitimate kings.

"I am your King," said he: "I am the only person who can say this. In this monarchy I desire to be nothing more than what I am. Monarchy is the best form of government. The monarch inherits from his predecessors not only the highest dignity, but also the zeal to use it for the honour of God and for the preservation of all."

"He had been told, it was true," he continued, "that an assembly of the Estates could easily shake the royal authority; such an event could happen however only when that authority was exercised to promote bad objects; but when its objects were

pure, as in the present case, an assembly of the Estates would rather strengthen the legitimate power, and therefore he had called them together in spite of all such objections. The object of the assembly he placed in the good advice of the subjects and the sacred resolutions of the prince\*.

“The decrees which should be agreed upon in this manner, he promised to swear to upon the Evangelists, and never under any pretext to violate. It might indeed appear that by giving these pledges he compromised the royal authority, which by law was made superior to the law itself; but he knew that the true magnanimity of a good prince consisted in regulating his intentions and proceedings according to good laws. Should he however by his present conduct diminish the royal power, he would only have made what remained of it the more firm and enduring.”

There is no reason to think that King Henry III. was guilty of either untruth or hypocrisy in these declarations; his meaning was to limit the crown,

\* “*Cette tenue d'Etats est un remède pour guérir, avec les bons conseils des sujets et la sainte résolution du Prince, les maladies que le long espace de temps et la négligente observation des ordonnances du royaume y ont laissé prendre pied.*”—Harangue faite par le Roi, etc.; also in the *Mém. de la Ligue*, ii. 481. It has been said that the speech was not published exactly as it was delivered, that there were in it some strongly offensive expressions in reference to Guise. I leave this undecided; it does not affect the principal matter.

whose original independence he firmly maintained, by subjecting it to laws which he himself should adopt freely. In this manner he thought to mediate between the monarchy and the Estates, in the ancient dispute which had agitated previous ages, and which was to agitate later times still more fiercely. The fundamental laws of the kingdom were to be renewed, or newly established, by a change freely concurred in by all its authorities ; and upon these fundamental laws, thus altered, the monarchy was to be bound by an inviolable oath.

Never did a French king approach nearer to the demands of the Estates than Henry III. at Blois. Was he not, it may be asked, taken at his word, and the difficulty of his position made use of in order to limit definitively the mutual rights of the throne and of the Estates ?

But there prevailed in the Estates ideas not only extended much further than the King's, but that rested upon grounds altogether different. We learn them especially from the schemes proposed at Paris\*.

The declaration of Henry III., that there could not be a Protestant, or, as it was said, heretical King in France, was not, according to their scheme, satisfactory. The view propounded was that should a King only favour heresy, it mattered not whether

\* " Articles pour proposer aux Estats et faire passer en loi fondamentale du royaume," in Cayet, *Anc. Coll. des Mémoires*, 55, 193 : Michaud, xii. 62.

directly or indirectly, by the very fact he forfeited his right to the Crown, and the French people were released from the oath of allegiance which they had sworn to him. In order to establish this view, the following theory was advanced. Kings are not kings naturally, but by the grace of God, namely the sanction of the Church, as it was made out to be, after an exposition replete with false history; this grace of God, imparted by anointing and consecration, gave them more right to the Crown than either nature or birth. Should a King refuse to bind himself by the fundamental laws of his kingdom, his authority at once reverted to the successors of those who had at first invested the royal race with royal authority, that is, to the Estates themselves\*. It is a singular compound of the sovereignty of the people and of clerical pretension, from which they seek to derive the power of the crown. Without the Estates, the King was neither to declare war, to conclude peace, nor to levy taxes; the pardons he might grant, or even the powers and authorities he might confer, they were to have power either to confirm or to recall. They were to have their procurators at the Court, in order that all their grievances might be brought instantly before the council. In each of the superior tribunals there was to be a chambe relected by the Estates, whose duty

\* "L'autorité, de laquelle ils ont premièrement revestu leurs roys, leur seroit dévolue."

should be to decide in the last instance upon the limits of their jurisdiction, and to control any excess in their sentences and judgements. A hierarchy, as it were, of the Estates, was to exist alongside of the royal tribunals and the privy council.

Two systems of limited monarchy here stand in opposition, both Catholic, and both intended for the reform of abuses, and therefore not essentially contradictory, yet separated from each other by an impassable chasm. The ideas of Hottmann and of Bodin meet, as it were, on another grade. Whilst the King sought to preserve the original and hereditary rights of the crown in their integrity, and would have made every limitation dependent upon his own resolution, and its duration upon his oath, the Estates laid claim to all original rights for themselves, maintaining that the King was entrusted with the exercise of those rights by them with the sanction of the Church, and that therefore it devolved upon them to take the largest share in the administration and superintendence of affairs.

These are precisely the antagonistic principles which have always contended for the ascendancy in the monarchies of Europe.

Had it depended on the consultations of the Estates, what system should henceforth prevail in France, their decision would not have been equivocal. In these Estates the only principles represented were those of the League. When it was spoken of at

first as possible that other opinions besides those of the League might have influence in the Assembly, Guise declared openly that his friends in the provinces would know how to prevent such from being the case. In all the three Estates the most zealous adherents of the League were chosen presidents : the clergy elected the Cardinal of Guise ; the nobility, the Count de Brissac, whose acquaintance we made at the barricades ; and the third Estate, the most enthusiastic member of the Council of Ten, Marteau, the *Prévôt des Marchands*. The propositions also of the Estates are in every respect correspondent with the ideas of the League.

The first and most important was that their decrees should have an immediate validity, and that the Parliaments should no longer verify but simply register them ; that above all things they should not be first submitted for approval to the Royal Council, but that they should be published as resolved upon. They cited the examples of Poland, Sweden, and England, and other neighbouring nations, where that practice was customary. The King remarked, that in Spain, where the Crown had never possessed so much power as in France, the custom and manner was different. He caused proceedings of the Cortes to be printed, in which the grievances of the Estates' deputies appeared by the side of the King's instructions ; what profound reverence did these documents display towards the

Sovereign ! We may venture to suppose however that no one conceived himself to be refuted by this.

Another claim made by the Estates was that they should have the supervision of the finances, and that, in order to put a stop to the violence of oppression and exaction practised by the partisans and other revenue officers, and to punish them for their excesses, a chamber of inquiry should be established, in the organization of which the Estates would have a preponderating influence. The King might appoint six of its members, the assembly of the Estates eighteen ; the Procurator-General was also to be chosen by the three Estates, and this officer should be an upright and impartial man, who should receive information from all the provinces of the acts of oppression, with the names of the transgressors ; but they were to receive an income according to what they had paid, and which had not been already returned by the produce of the lands\*.

The next subject that occupied attention was the immediate alleviation of the public burdens ; and here measures of a most extensive character were proposed. All the alienated domains of the Crown were to be resumed from the purchasers. The taxes introduced under the present government were to be immediately abolished, as well as all the

\* "Et que la nomination d'un Procureur Général seroit faite par les trois ordres, pour faire choix d'un homme roide et entier, qui auroit un substitut en chaque province de la France," etc.—*Des Etats Gén.* xv. 41.

other extraordinary imposts except the *taille*, and that was to be reduced at once to its amount under Francis I., and in time to that which it bore under Louis XII. It is manifest that the Treasury was here threatened with a deficiency which could not be calculated. The King represented to them the condition in which he was already placed, and the few favours he bestowed upon his attendants. He showed them his clothes, which must last him three months more. He was certainly no longer a spendthrift; his household was maintained upon a very humble footing; if two capons were thought too much for his table, he would content himself with one. He had not at the present moment a single sou in his purse; sometimes the money was wanting even for despatching a courier. If they were not willing to find some substitute for the imposts they were about to abolish, then their proceedings involved his destruction; but that which happened to the King happened to all. The Estates however insisted that the welfare of the people was the supreme law, and threatened to leave Blois if he would not consent to their views, and Henry, about the beginning of December, 1588, found himself at last under the necessity of complying. Although, he said, it had been represented to him that, in doing so, he reduced himself to the position of a Doge of Venice, yet he was determined to do it. He must be either very good and very gracious, or

very bad and obstinate. He also consented to the reduction of the *taille*, but on condition that the necessities of the State should be supplied in some other manner. The present income of the Government might amount to about nine million and a half of crowns. If his debts were assumed by the Estates he would endeavour to carry on the administration with five millions, and this he thought they ought at least to do. Meanwhile, however desirable and easy it might be for the Estates to point out the necessity of abolishing the imposts, it exceeded both their power and their intention to find a substitute for the revenue they produced. They fell upon the expedient of securing the public income by means of the personal security of the richest members of the Assembly of the Estates, which was neither more nor less than a republican idea, only that there were no men there who were republicans enough to carry it out. The subscriptions which were collected proved very scanty. In fact, every one desired to live by the State, rather than by previous personal sacrifices to make it possible to do so. The greatest embarrassment was the natural consequence; everything came to a standstill, and all proceedings were paralysed.

The Duke of Savoy availed himself of the helpless condition of France to promote his own interests. At the very commencement of these difficulties he had entered into the closest connection with Philip

II., for the purpose of invading and taking possession of Saluzzo, which was most conveniently situated for him, but which at that time belonged to the French\*.

In the Assembly of the Estates some declared it to be their opinion that everything else should be postponed until the Duke was punished as he deserved, for having dared to give offence to France with so disproportionately insignificant a power. It is not true, as some maintain, that Guise had a full understanding with the Duke of Savoy in regard to this enterprise ; he considered it at least very unseasonable. But as Savoy was a member of the great European League, to which the King of Spain and Sixtus V. also belonged, Guise had no wish to take arms against the Duke ; such a step would have given his policy a totally different character.

The disposition of the predominant party in the Estates was much more to renew with all vigour the war against the Huguenots and the King of Navarre, and to commit its direction to the Duke of Guise. They would not listen to a proposal that Navarre should for form's sake be once more requested to return to the bosom of the Catholic Church ; he had

\* He was in Spain at the close of March, 1585. "Ha lasciato," says the Venetian ambassador of him when he had taken his departure, "opinione in tutti non più di Piemontese, ma di Spagnolo."

been sufficiently often requested, and always in vain, and now, that he was openly in arms, it was not the time to negotiate with him. They declared Henry of Bourbon to be a notorious and relapsed heretic, guilty of offence against the Divine and human Majesty, unworthy of succeeding to the throne, and that his present and future heirs had forfeited all the rights of a Prince; he and they urged the King to remove him from his government of Guienne.

They felt no embarrassment as to the cost of this war, for they intended that the estates of the Protestants should be confiscated, and applied to that purpose. They even laid down a plan, in accordance with which one of the most considerable of the inhabitants in the chief town of each district was to be appointed as receiver of the funds to arise from the sale of the estates\*. The third Estate, which had at first hesitated at describing the King of Navarre as a heretic, as they considered that it did not belong to the laity to judge of such matters, adopted the word at last, because it involved the loss of property and hereditary rights. A general confiscation of the estates held by Protestants was contemplated, in consonance with the severest decrees

\* "Que tous hérétiques, de quelque état, qualité, ou condition qu'ils soient, soient punis de peines indictes et portées par les ordonnances des défunts rois de France, Francois I. et Henri II., et leurs biens employés au frais de la guerre," etc.—Cahier du Tiers Etat, Etats Gén., et autr. Ass. Nat., tom. xv. p. 156.

of the ecclesiastical law, similar to the sentence which had been formerly executed upon the Albigenses.

Henry of Guise had a leading hand in all these proceedings. His conduct at the opening of the Estates was remarkable, when, in discharging his office of Lord High Steward, he knelt at the foot of the throne, and cast upon the assembly round him a glance which expressed his assurance of the general admiration and devotion with which he was regarded as the commanding chief of a great party. He was master in the Estates, as well as in the council of the King. The leaders in the Assembly consulted him upon every step they wished to take, whilst in the Council no one presumed to contradict him. He leaned upon the great principles both ecclesiastic and popular, which alike excluded absolute government founded upon the right of birth. Whither then tended his designs? Was it really, as is asserted, his ambitious intention to set aside the King, and shut him up in a cloister, as the Carlovingians, from whom he was descended, did the last monarch of the Merovingian race? In a *pièce* addressed to Guise, and written immediately before the assembling of these Estates\*, mention is made of Charles Martel, who, after he had raised himself to the dignity of Major-domo, made use of that post, as a

\* "Instruction à M. de Guise retourné en Cour, par l'Archevêque de Lyon," somewhere about August, 1588, in the *Mémoirs of Villeroy*, 1665, ii. 266.

means to raise himself to a more exalted position; born a private man, he had left his children heirs to a throne. Did Guise actually aim at the high object of founding a new dynasty? I think I may assert that this was not the case. Moreo, who conducted the first negotiations with the Guises, asserts that Guise had promised the King of Spain that he would not for himself make any attempt upon the French crown\*. It may have been that Philip II. reserved some claim of this kind for his own house, or that the elevation of a private man to a crown, even though a confederate of his own, was displeasing to him. It is enough that Guise, who could not for a moment dispense with the assistance of the King of Spain, was fettered by the promises he had exacted. His ambition was not of that aspiring kind to which imagination gives birth; but the cool and practical ambition of a man of intellect, who always seeks to attain what lies nearest to him first, proceeds from position to position, and allows his efforts to be directed by the course of circumstances. Even the King did not regard him as a rival of his dignity, so much as of his power. He had formed the idea that Guise aspired after the place of Constable, and would if necessary accept it even on the nomination of the Estates, in order

\* He told the assembled Leaguers at Rouen, "que uno de los articulos de la capitulation era, que el dicho M. de Guisa no avis de intentar alla corona."—Papers of Simancas.

that, once invested with that authority, he might at their command undertake the war of persecution against the Huguenots. The King was apprehensive that he would be forcibly compelled to return to Paris, and there, in the midst of his rebellious subjects, be made the instrument to carry out their designs.

The most extraordinary scenes took place at Blois. On one afternoon a sanguinary affray occurred between the pages of both parties. Guise was at the residence of the Queen Mother ; the noise of the riot reached him from the castle, and at the same time some of his friends appeared to receive his orders. He sat on a stool by the fire-place, never altered a feature, did not look round on any one, but kept his eyes steadily fixed upon the fire. The King meanwhile armed himself in his own chamber with a coat of mail, firmly persuaded that his rival would make an attempt on his life.

Such was the condition of affairs. Henry III. was not himself fully convinced of the truth of his own notions of a power limiting itself by law, yet still firmly retaining the ideas of the monarchy ; all the resolutions of the Estates proceeded upon the ideas of a limitation which derived the origin and sum of power from another source. He perceived a systematic attempt to annihilate his authority, and to force him to the adoption of measures which of all others were the most odious to him. He endeavoured

once more to bring Guise to coincide with his views. Whilst walking with him in the garden, he spoke to him of the two most important requisitions of the Estates—the adoption of their decrees without considering them previously in the royal council, and the war against Henry of Navarre without summoning him anew to return to the Catholic Church,—and sought to convince him of the impossibility of his agreeing to them. Guise however not only remained unmoved in his opinions, but appeared to be irritated, and let fall words concerning the secret whisperings to which the King lent an ear, and which rendered the regular course of affairs impossible, and finally held out a threat of demission\*. Had this threat been put in execution, it would have been most probably the signal for a general insurrection against the King. Henry III. controlled himself whilst speaking with Guise; but when he returned to his own chamber, he gave free vent to his passionate emotions. The Italian blood boiled in his veins, and he conceived the idea of getting rid there, in the very palace, of the man whom he regarded as his most dangerous personal enemy.

A dream, which had formerly made a deep impression upon him, rose to his remembrance: he

\* Cayet, "Chronologie Novennaire," in Michaud, Nov. Coll. xii. 78. There is a little variation in Miron's 'Relation de la Mort de Ms. de Guise,' in Petitot, xlvi. 464.

thought he was attacked by the wild beasts of a menagerie ; and now this vision seemed to be fulfilled. He regarded the Duke as the lion by which he had feared in his dream he was about to be torn in pieces, and he determined to be on his defence against him.

In this he was confirmed by his most trusted attendants. The old expression of a Pope in reference to the last Hohenstaufen and the first Anjou in Naples—that the death of the one was the life of the other, and the life of the one the death of the other—was applied to the present case. The Italian proverb, “with the serpent dies its poison,” was quoted. The King was reminded of the motion which once reached him from the Papal court, that he should punish those by whom he was injured, and this, it was added, was no longer possible according to the usual forms ; for although Guise had committed a number of actions each of which deserved to be punished with death, yet so numerous and powerful was his party in the kingdom, that any attempt to proceed against him in a judicial manner would only create new disturbances and fresh confusion.

The King himself gave expression to this thought subsequently, and added that he had struggled with himself for six whole days\* before he could come to

\* To Morosini : “ Per sei giorni continui ero stato risolutissimo di non volerlo fare, temendo di offendere Dio ;” in Tempesti, ii.

the resolution to take the Duke's life, for he feared it would be an offence in the sight of God. At last however he considered that, as a king by the appointment of God, it was his duty to secure obedience to his authority. "I resolved," said he, on another occasion, "rather to allow him to be killed, than to wait until he killed me."

Formerly a great chief of the Huguenots attained a position in which the exercise of the supreme power appeared to rest in his hands. Now their hereditary foe, the champion of the Catholics, was ascending with deliberate progress the very steps of the throne, and his adherents looked forward to his actually taking his place upon it. Then Catharine, in order to destroy Coligny, let loose the fanaticism of the capital to which she had invited him. Now her son in his own palace resolved to lay violent hands upon Guise, who was a guest beneath its roof.

Guise, like Coligny, received a warning, but, like him too, he thought himself too strong for any one to make an attempt upon him. He was acquainted with the revengeful disposition of the King, but he considered him too irresolute and too much of a

135. The fate of Martinuzzi, of Escovedo, and others, appear to set forth a theory of those times according to which transactions of this kind were lawful for crowned heads. (Compare St. Priest, "Les Guises," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, May, 1850, p. 810.) We perceive however that Henry III. did not, properly speaking, shelter himself under this theory.

coward to undertake anything against him. "And should it be attempted," said he, in one of his letters, "I shall carry out my design with more vigour than at Paris: let them beware of me." Against secret plots he believed himself secured by the personal influence he had acquired over some of the King's immediate attendants. By nature he was to a certain degree careless. Whilst he bade defiance to his King, he maintained a connection of illicit love which fully occupied him. How was it possible he could have anticipated that his own brother, Mayenne, should have sent to the King the most urgent warnings against him and his designs\*? Without apprehension of either secret or open foes, he went about, trusting in his position and in the condition of affairs, and despising his antagonist, who was preparing everything meanwhile to destroy him.

Henry III. had forty-five body-guards, whom he kept round him for his personal security: all resolute men, and devoted to him for life and death. From these he chose, as the executioners of the deed upon which he had determined, such as appeared to him most suitable either through their skill in arms

\* In the 'Déclaration contre le Duc de Mayenne' it is fully shown that Henry was warned by Mayenne himself of the speedy execution of an attempt upon him: "Que nous prissions bien garde à nous . . . que le terme étoit si bref, que s'il ne se hâtoit (*i. e.* the messenger), il étoit bien à craindre qu'il n'arriveroit pas assez à tems."

or other qualities, and appointed them their place in or near his old cabinet, and not far from the chamber in which the Council held its deliberations. He was perfectly secure of his victim. When Guise appeared in the Council on the morning of December the 23rd, he was called to the Cabinet. The guard answered his salutations as he passed along, with a dead silence. As he opened the curtain which led to the Cabinet, he was attacked with the cry “Ah! traitor!” thrown to the ground, and whilst, all at once comprehending the affair, he defended himself with his teeth and hands like a wild beast, for he had not time to draw his sword, murdered at the foot of the royal couch. Henry was waiting for the execution of his order in a room lying further back, in company with the Corsican, Alfonso; in the chamber underneath lay his mother, Catharine de' Medici, on her death-bed. The noise was heard in the hall where the Council was sitting; at the same moment the Cardinal of Guise, who was there, was arrested.

The fate of *Ætius* was involuntarily remembered, who, because he had grown too powerful, was, out of fear and hatred, murdered by the Emperor and his attendants in the palace at Ravenna.

The constitutions of the Romanic-German kingdoms, which associated the monarchical authority with the right of descent, were originally designed to avoid the violent struggles for it which incessantly

shook the Roman system, and to set insuperable barriers to the ambition of powerful and aspiring men. When however such attempts *were* made, the most frightful actions were the result. Without any regard to his ecclesiastical dignity, the King caused the Duke's brother, the Cardinal of Guise, to be executed also : he deemed that a King of France had a prerogative which set him above excommunication.

Catharine de' Medici, who had not been in her son's confidence, collected all her strength, and made a visit to the Cardinal of Bourbon, who was also arrested, though not yet condemned to death. He attributed all the blame to her, and told her she could not rest until she had brought them all to the slaughter-house. She was deeply affected ; and, under the impression made upon her by these words, as well as in view of the dangers which menaced her son, with respect to which she was not deceived, she breathed her last.

Liberated from his antagonist, Henry III. might have once more for a moment felt himself as sovereign and master. At Blois, in his neighbourhood, all was submissive. But it was not possible to prevent the politico-religious elements that filled his kingdom from exhibiting a fiercer agitation against him after such a deed.

The chief had fallen, the Estates were fettered, but the hatred of the excited people now for the first time broke out in general and uncontrolled rage.



## CHAPTER XXV.

## RESOLUTION AND CATASTROPHE OF HENRY III.

No sooner did the authorities at Paris receive intelligence of the event, than they shut the gates of the city, and held a council under the presidency of the Duke of Aumale. It was just in the Christmas holidays; the preachers began to rouse the people, and the fury of the mob was directed immediately against those who were regarded as friends of the King—the party named Politicians—both in the Parliament and amongst the clergy. In the Sorbonne, the younger members, who were imbued with the doctrines of the Jesuits, and carried away by the tide of popular opinion, obtained the predominancy. Without at all considering that the right of excommunication belonged to the Pope, not to the faculty of a university, the Sorbonne, upon the question being submitted to it by the city, decided that because the King had broken the public faith to the disadvantage of the Catholic religion, the French

people were absolved from their oath of allegiance to him, and justified in uniting and arming themselves against him\*. After this, they no longer gave the King his title, and they refused to receive his heralds.

What had taken place in Paris was repeated in nearly all the great towns of the kingdom. In Picardy, the towns of Amiens and Abbeville—in Normandy, Havre and Rouen—in Champagne, Troyes, Rheims, and Sens—Burgundy, Brittany, and Provence, were nearly unanimous in following the example of Paris. Toulouse carried the cities of Languedoc in the same direction; Orléans requested that the King would remove the governor of the citadel, and when he refused to do so, the city rose in full insurrection, paying no attention to his threats. The mayor, aldermen, and Catholic inhabitants of Lyons, came to a resolution to obey no commands, from whomsoever they might come, to the disadvantage of the holy Union. In their manifesto they mention the deposition of Saul by the Prophets, and the mission of Jehu against Ahab; for men's minds were everywhere filled with that singular mixture of popular and spiritual no-

\* When Argentré (ii. 483) remarks that there is no trace of this sentence or of four similar ones in the books of the Faculty, it merely shows that they were erased from the books. The Procurator-General, to whom the champions of the Sorbonne appeal, denies not the fact, but the guilt of it: "Virus novitii ac feri dominatis à recentibus scholis susceptum," Ib. 489.

tions which inflamed their zeal to resistance, and appeared to justify it.

In Paris meanwhile they proceeded to the establishment of a new government, not without the participation of the Spanish ambassador. On the 17th of January, 1589, a general council of the Union was held at the Hôtel de Ville. It comprised a few of the Catholic princes, the most zealous of the bishops, and the most distinguished theologians and parish priests, members of the Parliaments and of the nobility, and a number of citizens, the intention being to constitute something like a committee of all the Estates\*. The deputies from the different towns had places in the Council also. The Duke of Mayenne—who, although he had warned the King to be on his guard against the Duke of Guise, never imagined that it would have resulted in his brother's death—did not hesitate, now that that event had occurred, to place himself at the head of the confederates. The King made one more attempt to bring over him and his house, and made him offers of the most extensive and valuable nature†. Was it however in his power to offer anything corresponding with the prospects which the leaders of a universal movement

\* Maheustre et Manant: "Ils firent élire par le peuple un Conseil Général de l'union des Catholiques."

† Cayet, 418, gives a slight, Morosini, in Tempesti, ii. 183, a satisfactory notice of these negotiations.

in a contest against him might have contemplated ? Besides this, his word had now lost all credit. Mayenne replied to all the advances made to him through the Papal Legate, with invectives against Henry III., whom he no longer dignified with the royal title, but called him a miserable wretch, a pitiful creature, who by his last treacherous act had rendered anything like an agreement with him impossible, and added, that he must be met openly, and opposed in arms by all who desired to save themselves from destruction. In a short time we see the Duke of Mayenne at the head of the army of the Union, taking the field against his King.

Thus commenced the open war between the King and the League. At the moment it appeared as if the former could not possibly resist his enemies ; his entire power was limited to the possession of Blois, Tours, and a few places in the surrounding district.

It was of incalculable advantage to him that there was still a power in France which was unaffected by the general agitation. The army of the King of Navarre was not large ; it consisted of five thousand ordinary infantry, five hundred harquebusiers, and five hundred cavalry, but they were all brave soldiers, inured to war, excellently disciplined, and full of devotion to their leader ; amongst the troops of the time they always appeared the most important. In the beginning of March, 1589, this army directed its march from Guienne towards the Loire.

A feeling immediately prevailed amongst the troops on both sides, that they were no longer enemies, and whenever they met, they mingled with each other in a kind of military fraternity. In fact this could not have been long delayed, for the two princes had but one and the same enemy. On the 3rd of April a treaty was adopted, in the form of a truce for one year, between the King of France and the King of Navarre, but this truce signified a full community of interests and of arms. Henry III. acknowledged that, in coming to his assistance, the chief of the Huguenots, who might otherwise have carried on the designs of his party far and wide to the destruction of the Catholics, had given a proof of his duty as a true subject, and of his principles as a genuine Frenchman. He returned to that state of the Pacification, which, though perhaps not in exact accordance with his opinions and wishes, was the best suited to his nature and to the condition of the country, and declared the free exercise of the Reformed religion to be lawful in all places where his confederates might happen to be, in the camp, as well as in appointed places in each district of the kingdom\*. The stipulation for a secure passage over the Loire, made by the Reformed, could not be fulfilled without difficulty, owing to the indepen-

\* Mémoires de Mornay, i. 906. What appears in Isambert, xiv. 645, as "Lettres d'Armistice," is rather an account of it than the treaty itself.

dent manner in which the authorities of the age exercised their power. At length it was accomplished. Saumer was delivered up to Duplessis-Mornay, who had chiefly conducted the negotiations, and was one of the most trusted servants of Navarre. He swore to maintain this place for the two kings, and restore it in a better condition than it was when he received it into his possession\*.

The meeting of the two kings in the park at Plessis-les-Tours was looked upon as a great event. Not only were the banners united, but from out of the tumultuary contests of the time at last arose ideas in which men of different religious views might unite. Henry III. declared that he would no longer allow the Protestants to be called heretics, the word was not so used in former times; whoever confessed the Gospel was a Christian, and petty differences ought not to occasion enmity and hostility. The Protestants, in return, revived the strict principles of royalty. They maintained that the Christian doctrines required obedience to the temporal authority,—that the Prince rules through the will of God,—that God directs his heart according to his own will,—and that whoever resists the Prince is a rebel against the law of God. They

\* According to the Biography of Duplessis-Mornay, 131, Henry received the intelligence in the house of M. de Menu. In the itinerary to the edition of the Letters it does not appear when he was there; it may have been the 13th or 14th of April.

excused the murder of Guise upon the grounds that his crimes and treasons against the King could not have been punished had the insurrection been let to break out; and that the King was answerable to God alone for his proceedings. As on the other side anti-royalist and exclusive Catholic doctrines were closely associated, so on this the principles of royalism and of tolerance were united.

It was the bravery of the Huguenots that now mainly saved Henry III. from the hostile attempts of Mayenne. How frequently in the skirmishes that ensued have they appeared in their white scarfs at the critical moment, and decided the affair in favour of the King!

Henry III. obtained other assistance also, and still from the side of the Protestants, from Switzerland. That which was a matter of doubt amongst the Swiss in 1587, namely whether they would not be damaging the King by marching against Guise, was doubtful no longer; affairs had come to maturity; the cause of the French crown now coincided with the proper interests of the Protestant cantons. After the Duke of Savoy had made himself master of Saluzzo, he began to entertain the old design of reducing Geneva and Vaud; he was observed to be strengthening his garrisons in this neighbourhood. The provincial nobility took part with him, and a formidable conspiracy sustained by him was discovered in Lausanne. Geneva soli-

cited aid from the Swiss confederacy. Harlay de Sancy, who had been sent as Envoy Extraordinary from Blois at a time of the greatest distress, when they had not even the means of living, in order to enlist Swiss auxiliary troops, had, though destitute of money, the ability to turn these circumstances to advantage. He mediated an alliance between Berne and Geneva, in consequence of which he was permitted to enroll a considerable body of troops, and was even granted a subsidy in money by Geneva\*. It was evident to the Genevese that unless France were strong enough to counterbalance the power of Spain and Savoy, they must be lost.

Sancy led his force first against Savoy, captured Thonon and the strongly fortified Ripaille. Considering that he had thus done enough to give employment to the Duke, and as the other Swiss cantons did not wish to see the power of Berne too much increased, the whole army was satisfied when he suddenly led them towards the Upper Rhine.

\* "Ceux de Berne et de Genève, désirans prendre cette occasion pour se revancher des torts à eux faits par le Duc de Savoie, monstrent avoir quelque volonté d'assister le Roy en cette aventure et le secourir en sa nécessité de quelques deniers comptans, et autres inventions nécessaires à cette entreprise."—From the 'Mémoires de M<sup>r</sup> de Sillery' (MS. at Berlin), which gives the best view of the state of things in Switzerland. There exists a 'Discours fait au Roi sur l'Occurrence de ses Affaires,' by Sancy, in which he gives the prominence to his own skill and activity, which have however been since the time of Mézeray passed over by historical writers.

Here they formed a junction with a body of German cavalry and harquebusiers, and then directed their march towards the interior of France. Had not Henry III. been certain of this assistance, he would hardly have ventured to pass the Loire.

And now that he had not permitted himself to be oppressed, he found a third source of aid in the reviving allegiance of the nobility. From all sides the Catholic Royalists now joined his banners; amongst them were observed the well-armed squadrons of Epernon. At Pontoise the King saw himself once more at the head of an army of forty thousand men. For the first time in his life perhaps his heart was elevated to the decision of great designs emanating freely from his own mind. His nature was like that of Sardanapalus, which in seasons of prosperity abandoned itself to enervating luxury, but in adversity became courageous and manful. He took his way directly towards Paris, for, said he, the enemy must be wounded in the heart, and Paris is the heart of the League. He appeared before the city at the close of July, expecting in a short time to enter it, and take vengeance upon his enemies, for he knew well that he had a great number of friends and adherents within the walls.

This termination of the campaign did not appear impossible even to those who were within the city. As the King continued his march without interrup-

tion to Paris, the Politicians raised their heads once more, and the civic magistrates held it advisable to disarm them, and to double the guards. The King however conquered Senlis and Pontoise, and encamped his army at St. Cloud. Upon this it was thought necessary in the city to make sure of the persons of the most distinguished Politicians, who were placed in custody in convents and strong houses, whilst the less dangerous, whose number was said to be six hundred, were forbidden to leave their dwellings. In the Sorbonne even there were some dissentients; but in general the extreme opinions prevailed, and another decree, of the most disrespectful and wildest character, was agreed to. It was not enough that the legitimate King was not to be mentioned in any of the prayers of the Church\*; it declared that there were two species of tyrants,—the one which only exercises violence against private persons, the other which injures at the same time the common weal and religion; that Henry III. belonged to the latter class, and that, according to the maxims of the ancient spiritual doctors of the Church, he might be lawfully put to death by a private hand. This decree gave the tone to the discourses delivered in all the pulpits; an avenger was demanded for the murder of Guise, and the slaughter of the tyrant proclaimed to be a meri-

\* Arrest et Résolution, Mém. de la Ligue, iii. 540. In Bulæus and Crévier the search for these affairs is vain.

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torious work. Often were the relics of the saints belonging to the city, whose service was imperilled by the treacherous King, carried through the streets; the people followed in multitudes, and with a devotion which astonished even the Spaniards.

From this however it was not to be concluded that they would defend themselves with equivalent bravery. When the aid promised them by the Duke of Parma from the Netherlands delayed its appearance, a sensible diminution of courage was perceptible. The citizens refused to man the walls, and the soldiers, badly paid, showed no ardour; many went over to Henry III., in the hope of being able to return with him when the city should be plundered. The Spanish ambassador himself was of opinion that Paris could not hold out longer than for a fortnight.

Fanatical opinions, in general, exercise their full power on individuals rather than on great corporations. From the midst of the common fermentation there now arose a monk, who resolved to perpetrate a fresh deed of horror. This was a young man, named Jacques Clément\*, of the Dominican order, who had been recently ordained a priest;

\* In Boucher's book, 'De Justitiâ Henrici III. Abdicatione,' which appeared after the deed, there are some remarkable notices of Clément, especially at page 451. I have followed chiefly the narrative sent to Spain by Mendoza, 'Relacion del subcesso de la muerte del Rey Christianissimo de Francia, Henrique III. 1 Aug., 1589.'

to persons of his own age and to his friends he was an object of ridicule rather than of respect ; he was weak in body and simple in mind ; but such are the natures upon which fanatical doctrines make the most profound impression. Clément felt himself so filled with the notion that a tyrant who sought to destroy religion and the common weal might be lawfully killed by a private hand\*, which was then promulgated especially by Boucher, that his priesthood alone made him feel any scruples. He laid before his superiors the question, whether it would be a mortal sin for a priest to kill a tyrant. The superiors answered that it would be an irregularity, but no mortal sin†. Nothing however confirmed him so much in his design as the monitory of the Pope against the King, which resembled an excommunication. The King appeared to him as a monster, who was eager to swallow up both religion and the State. He believed he should perform an infinitely meritorious act, if he saved them both from him. He was desirous of falling in the service, for he feared that if he succeeded and remained alive, the admiration of the French nation would be unsalutary to the state of his soul.

\* Boucher, 266 : "Tyrannum qui communis se boni, id est religionis ac patriæ, hostem præbuerit, talisque à republicā judicatus sit, et publicā et privatā auctoritate de medio tolli posse."

† "Question. Si peccava mortalmente un sacerdote que matasse à un tirano? Ansuer. Que quedava el tal sacerdote irregular."

With cool blood, and the most serious deliberation, he bathed his knife in a decoction of herbs, which he himself at least believed to be poisonous. He then provided himself with a letter directed to one of the King's attendants, for the purpose of obtaining access to his presence ; and having left a little money to pay some trifling debts, he set out upon his journey with a few companions. When he came within side of the lines he took leave of his friends, loosened his frock, and with rapid strides directed his course towards the enemy's camp. He succeeded in obtaining admission to the King's presence on the following morning. Henry was sitting on his close-stool, and hoping to hear some proposals for an accommodation on the part of the city ; he caused the monk to approach : he did so, and immediately stabbed the King in the abdomen. Clément was instantly killed, but he had secured his victim ; and eighteen hours afterwards the last of the House of Valois ceased to exist.

In the trenches before Paris an attack of the royal troops was momentarily looked for ; the Spanish ambassador had appeared there, to animate the citizens to resistance, when the tidings of the King's death were announced. The green scarf of Lorraine was immediately displayed ; Jacques Clément was celebrated as a martyr in the pulpits ; the Catholic popular faction carried its head higher than ever, and hoped yet to triumph.

**BOOK VI.**

**HENRY IV. IN CONTEST WITH THE LEAGUE.**



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## ELEVATION OF HENRY THE FOURTH.

SAINT LOUIS left two sons, from the elder of whom descended the last Capetians, and the line of Valois; from the younger the Bourbons. Of these there were also two lines: to the one belonged the Constable, in whom it terminated; to the other, his contemporary and antagonist, Duke Charles of Vendôme, who did as much for the defence of France as the Constable did to endanger it. The sons of Vendôme were Anthony, who became King of Navarre by his marriage with Johanna d'Albret; Charles, Cardinal of Bourbon; and Louis, first Prince of Condé. Anthony's son was King Henry of Navarre; he was descended from Saint Louis in the tenth generation, and was, by the same hereditary right to which the house of Valois was indebted for its elevation, the undoubted heir of the French throne.

When Henry was born, in December, 1553, it could not have been supposed that he was destined

to occupy the throne of France, for the house of Valois was then flourishing in its full strength. His grandfather greeted in him the heir of Navarre and Béarn, the maintainer of the ancient independence of the French provinces united under his dominion, and of the crown of Navarre. It has been narrated a thousand times, how he summoned his daughter Johanna when her time was near to his mountain castle at Pau, on the Gave; how she, in accordance with his wish (for she was vigorous as the native women, and everything was to be conducted after the manner of the country), whilst in the pains of childbirth, joined in the prayer in the traditional tune customary in Béarn; and with what strange ecstasy the grandfather received the new-born infant; how he carried him to his own chamber in his ample mantle, filled a golden cup with native wine, allowed the perfume of it to approach the nose of the babe, let fall a drop of it into his mouth, then kissed him, and prophesied that he would be a true Béarnais\*. A peasant woman, who lived near the castle park, was the first nurse to whom the boy was entrusted; he was afterwards sent to Coirraze, in the mountains, where, in company with boys of his own age, bare-headed

\* Favyn, 'Histoire de Navarre.' A manuscript contemporary biography of Henry IV., in the Bibliothèque Nationale, contains some notices of the earlier events of Henry's life and of his education; not so much new matter however as might be expected, but in other respects it is valuable.

and bare-footed, he ran through the mountains, and became familiar with their steep paths.

His mother Johanna too, who was naturally of a lively and cheerful temperament, and possessed indomitable energy, cherished a feeling that her native land would not be annihilated, as it was sometimes threatened to be by the great powers which surrounded it. But she also contemplated another mission for her son. The early death of Anthony, who, as in other matters, vacillated as regarded the religious instruction of his son\*, left her at liberty to conduct it as she thought best. She did not hesitate for a moment, but brought Henry up in the Protestant faith, which she had made the prevailing religion in her territories. She taught him to sing Marot's Psalms; she appointed a learned Protestant to be his tutor, who also read with him the classics, such as Plutarch and Cæsar, and, proud to think that he was trained in accordance with the pure word of God, she conducted him at the age of fifteen to Rochelle, among the Protestants, who were there united to resist their enemies. Young Henry was received with a pompous figurative oration. "I do not know how to speak as well as you," he answered, "but I assure you that I will act better than I speak †." He was imme-

\* Ippolyto d'Este, April 4, 1562, notices this.

† From the notes of Amos Barbot, in Arcère's 'Histoire de Rochelle,' i. 370.

diately drawn into the midst of the war, and after the death of his uncle, the Prince of Condé, acknowledged as the head of the Huguenots. His mother girded on his sword with joy. She took pleasure in narrating how she had once, during her pregnancy, dreamt that she had brought a young cock into the world, with strong coloured feathers on his neck and wings, and his comb ~~erected~~ erected for battle. After the battle of Moncontour, Henry accompanied the Admiral, whom he regarded with unlimited reverence, in that adventurous cavalry expedition through France which brought about the pacification of 1570. It was, as De La Noue says, a good school for the formation of ideas and plans according to the state of things.

During the peace, the Prince felt animated by another wish, springing from the desire for more exalted renown. Charles IX., who felt a stronger personal attachment to him than to his own brothers, promised him that he would, as it were, share with him the exercise of his authority, and make him, as he expressed it, his right arm. Henry, in consequence, contemplated measuring himself with the Spaniards, whom he would not suffer to retain Navarre, of which they had taken possession, and with the Turks, who were encroaching upon Christendom. Upon no one did the victory of Don John of Austria, at Lepanto, make a deeper impression than upon young Henry. He envied the Bastard in

being celebrated as the hero of Europe. To appear at the head of a French army, and to win two great battles, one against the Spaniards and the other against the Ottomans, was the dream of his youthful imagination, and the object that occupied his soul.

His course was however turned in a totally different direction, by his union with the Court of the house of Valois.

Henry's marriage with the sister of Charles IX. was the Bloody Wedding. The proud companions with whom he hoped to perform such glorious deeds were murdered before his eyes; he was spared himself only through his near relationship and his change of religion; on no account however would he be allowed to return to his home. What a contrast was this residence at court to his mountain-life, by the side of his mother, with her faultless morals, and the aspiring Admiral, who associated the loftiest principles with all his enterprises! Henry was compelled to take part in campaigns which in his heart he execrated; he was implicated in the movements of Alençon, whom he disliked, against the dark power of the Queen Mother, who held every one in control; he was united to a clever but unchaste woman, against whom he could never, even with a word, testify his displeasure. The servants which were placed round him were spies, if not enemies, whose wickedness he was compelled to evade continually. It was another school where

was to be learned to suppress the moral sentiments, and to restrain the internal feelings from rising to the surface. But there was something in Henry IV. which corresponded with the life at court: he plunged into the very whirlpool of passion and of pleasures; he appeared to live only for the chase, the tennis-court, and love; and those pleased him best whose folly seemed most extravagant\*. He formed the centre for all the gay and pleasure-seeking youth of the Court. From time to time however the religious impressions of earlier years would return: a trusty servant heard him once, in the loneliness of the night, complain, in the words of the Psalmist, of the darkness into which he had fallen; he must also have felt the prospect of living for the future in a state of semi-captivity, as at present, intolerable. When the general state of things was favourable, in 1576, he seized the opportunity which his apparent self-abandonment procured him of escaping, and returned once more to his former friends and his old religion.

We have noticed how he afterwards assisted in bringing about the pacification which gave France repose for a period. He then in reality took possession of that post for which his mother had long destined him as King of Navarre and protector of the Huguenots.

The power and authority which he now possessed

\* Mémoires de Villegomblain, i. 317.

was by no means unimportant. From his small kingdom, which the care of his mother and grandfather had brought into a prosperous condition, he could bring into the field three hundred mounted gentlemen and six thousand harquebusiers. He had an arsenal at Navarreins, and a university at Orthès. With the sums accruing to him from Foix, Aragnac, and the Bourbon hereditary estates, his whole income might have amounted to 300,000 francs. His position as protector of the Huguenots gave him still greater consideration, since their military force was at his disposal. There were now what may be called three strongholds of Protestantism in France: Béarn, which was regulated after the manner of a German principality; Rochelle, powerful at sea; and the Cevennes, important for their strong places and brave population. But besides this the whole south was studded with Protestant communities; it was stated that one might have travelled from the Pyrenees to the Alps through places connected through the new religion alone. In Dauphiné there were four hundred gentlemen, and in Poitou and Saintonge five hundred, ready at any moment to take horse for the cause of religion. A few councillors from these provinces attended the King of Navarre in order to assist him in the political affairs of the party.

The little court which he established at Nérac emulated the court at Paris, especially when his

consort, Margaret of Valois, whom Henry III. would not allow to remain in the capital, made her appearance there; and this rivalry was not always in the most praiseworthy things. There was however still a great difference. At Nérac there was nothing heard of favourites or of wasteful extravagance. The court was also a school for captains; merit in war gave to each his rank; the ladies incited their knights to warlike enterprises: a petty war took its name from that circumstance. Henry won his first honours in a street-battle at Cahors, in which he took part, for personal bravery was still the foundation of the most distinguished renown. In the middle of his guards he scaled the barricades which had been erected for the purpose of resisting his attack, his feet cut and bleeding from the sharp stones with which they were formed. But he also showed himself already as a skilful leader. He thoroughly weighed the probabilities of each enterprise, and occasionally decided upon a course opposed to the advice of his captains; he knew his people personally, and addressed them by their names; he was the first on the field of battle, and the last to leave it.

By degrees he erased the opinion which had been formed of him on account of his conduct at Paris, and which attributed to him levity of character, dependence upon others, and unworthiness of trust. An author whom he asked to write his life, and who

answered that he must first accomplish something worth recording, found in the course of time ample materials for a biography. In the conduct of affairs Henry showed both decision and expertness, and in personal relations the natural gift of managing men,—in all things an original and just comprehension, which gave every one satisfaction. His conduct gave rise to the opinion that he was born for the accomplishment of great things. As one of his most prudent friends, Duplessis-Mornay, expresses it: here was what the world longed for, what it thirsted to behold—a true king; it only required that he should stand forth, to be acknowledged.

In this Mornay shows that he did not know the world, whose admiration and recognition must be forced from it by great deeds: before his prince there was still a struggle of the most painful and difficult nature.

The union between the Guises and the Spaniards was directed against him personally. At first the King of Navarre, who, while at the French court, had been very intimate with the Duke of Guise, offered to decide the whole affair with him in personal combat; the inequality of their rank was not to be any hindrance. He was content that it should be a duel between them both, or between two against two, ten against ten, or twenty against twenty, with the arms usual in affairs of honour

between knights. Guise was at liberty to appoint the numbers, and to choose the place of battle, even out of the kingdom if he wished, provided only that it were neutral and secure. The King's friends entreated that he would not forget them if it should come to a trial of arms between numbers. Guise however declined the proposal, stating that he did not fight for personal matters, but for the cause of religion.

After some time Henry was destined to experience another disappointment, when even his king and master, with whom he thought he stood on the best terms, made common cause with Guise. We know, from his own reminiscences, that the intelligence of this change nearly unmanned him. Many a one will recognize that self-torturing anguish of soul which arises when we despair of all earthly things, and see in our fellow-men only enemies, threatening and urging forward our destruction. When the tidings reached Henry he laid his head upon his hand, and when he aroused himself from the benumbed state into which they had thrown him, a portion of his hair had turned grey\*.

In the year 1586 a great military force was put in motion against the Huguenots in the provinces generally, against him and his government in particular. He was advised to give way to the storm for a moment, to betake himself to Germany,

\* Mathieu, to whom he told it, Henry III., 501.

where he might obtain some auxiliary forces, and then come back and march immediately upon Paris. Others however represented to him that in doing so he would cast the sword from his hand, and become a Don Antonio of Portugal, and with them he agreed\*. "They have surrounded me," he says, in one of his letters, "like a wild beast of chase, but I will make myself a way over their bodies†." He was desirous of terminating the affair rather in the bloom and vigour of his youth, than when he should be laden with years and infirmities.

Amongst the Protestants he had in this determination no ally more enterprising or powerful than Lesdiguières in Dauphiné. Whilst a student in papal Avignon Lesdiguières had renounced both his studies and Catholicism, and thrown himself into the Huguenot war, persuaded that by resisting the Guises he would render the best service to his king and to his native land. He acquired reputation and authority by the side of Montbrun, who, amongst many others who deserved the same distinction, acquired the title of The Brave by his gallant actions and great authority in Dauphiné. When he was at length taken prisoner and put to death,

\* The considerations were Duplessis-Mornay's originally, 'Vie de Duplessis-Mornay,' 95; but still they were those which determined the King's resolution: "A souvent témoigné le Roi qu'il (Dup. Morn.) luy avoit été auteur de cette résolution." The resolution was embraced spontaneously, not as the result of a debate.

† To De Batz, March 11-12.

Lesdiguières appeared as his natural successor. He was indebted to the influence of Henry of Navarre for his recognition by the province, and received from him the half of a broken piece of gold, and he promised that as soon as the other was sent to him he would immediately take arms\*.

Of still greater value was the resistance made by Damville de Montmorency, the leader of the party called Politicians, to the attempt made by the Guises to draw him over to their side. This may be looked upon as one of the most important effects produced by the hatred between the two houses. Montmorency caused the union between Protestants and Catholics to be confirmed in an assembly at Pézenas, and the Court of Justice at Béziers to pledge itself on oath to the observance of the edict of 1577, without any respect to that last issued by the League†; and having done this, he mounted his war-horse to place himself at the head of his troops. He bore on his black cloak a white cross, adorned with the lilies of France, and said that this campaign would result in either the complete victory of the house of Montmorency or in its extinction.

When it is remembered that Henry IV. also had contemplated a similar equality of condition between the two religious parties in Guienne, and had

\* Videl, 'Histoire de Lesdiguières,' 92.

† Vaissette, 'Histoire de Languedoc,' v. 410.

taken Catholics into the provincial council which he assembled, it will be seen that the resistance offered to the League was founded, not upon the one-sided interests of party, but upon the expediency of enabling those who held different religious views to live together.

This direction of men's minds, through the gradual course of events, now opened a grand prospect for the whole kingdom.

It had been long regarded in France as a decree of Destiny that the house of Valois should become extinct. It was related that Catharine de' Medici practised those arts by which it was believed that what was removed in time and place could be regarded as present, and that, whilst staying at the castle of Chaumont on the Loire, on one occasion she caused the whole series of French kings to pass before her, and that each of the shadows, as it was called up, made the round of the magic circle as many times as there had been years in his reign. After all the others came her own sons; and last of all Henry III., who was still living, made his appearance. He passed round the circle fifteen times, and then suddenly vanished. His mother still continued to gaze with eagerness to know whether another king of her blood would arise, when the Prince of Navarre, vigorous and active as she knew him, stepped forth to view.

Many prophecies of a similar import were circu-

lated, and their fulfilment observed to take place by degrees for five-and-twenty years, until at last the death of Alençon brought it home to the general consciousness of the nation. From this time it was also observed that the ideas of Henry of Bourbon, perhaps involuntarily, far more than previously, were directed toward the State in general. He had never as yet communicated to any one an idea that the throne of France was destined for him; on the contrary, he often stated that there was no probability of such an event, since the reigning King was of like age with himself, and could take better care of himself than he could who was in arms.

Who can doubt as to the genuineness of the dynastic feeling which animated him at that meeting in the park of Plessis? Great tears rolled down from his eyes as the King, who was once more his friend, came in view; his ambition went no further than to be acknowledged as first prince of the blood, and to fulfil the duties of that position by the side of the King.

The fortune of his arms soon brought him to Blois, where a short time before it had been formally declared by the Estates of the kingdom that he had forfeited all his rights and possessions. "What has more authority," said Henry, "than a decree of the assembled Estates of the kingdom? But the Almighty has revised the process and re-established

me in my rights." The letter containing this unpremeditated effusion is directed to the Countess de Grammont, at that time his mistress,—for in every act of his life his passion accompanied him—who, after the manner of such ladies, added some very cool and very selfish remarks.

Another trait in the character of Henry was displayed in the fiery impulse which urged him forward to the siege of Paris. The reputation of such an enterprise, he said, would be a magnet which would draw all the iron in France round him ; boldness is the mother of opinions, from this springs power, from power victory, and thence follows security. King Henry III. was complaining one day that he, a good Catholic, should have been excommunicated, a proceeding which had not been taken even against those who had once taken Rome itself by storm. "That is," said Henry, "because they were victorious : only let us conquer, and the sentence of excommunication which has been spoken over us will be speedily recalled."

And yet there is no doubt but that even a victory might have been dangerous to him, for Henry III. was pleased at the service rendered him, but not with the honour and personal confidence which they acquired who rendered him the service; and besides he adhered firmly to the principle that the first prince of the blood must be a Catholic ; and as Henry of Navarre was not disposed to yield to

him, it was evident that after the conquest of the capital he would be compelled to return once more to Guienne, and to re-occupy the old party position.

Meanwhile Henry III. was slain. The monk who murdered him because he was not Catholic enough, prepared the way to the throne for the Huguenot prince.

The French nation had once gathered round the house of Valois in a mighty struggle for its independence. With the manifold phases of that struggle however arose internal discords which the Princes had not the power or skill to master so easily. These were, first, such as sprang from the Estates, then the towns, and those of a clerical and religious nature. Through the confusion in which the last members of that house were implicated, they sought more than once to make their way by deeds of the greatest violence, until at length, from the midst of that orthodox party which they in general defended, arose the blood-avenging arm which terminated their existence.

In what condition did they now leave the country! A Spaniard compared the French monarchy at the time to a pomegranate whose shell was burst open, leaving only the kernels to be seen, with something of the partitions that divided them; for unity was not to be thought of. The powerful magnates exercised the authority formerly entrusted to them by the kings, as they thought proper, for the promotion

of their individual interests ; their designs tended to the formation of provincial satrapies. The leading men in the towns held it possible to become free commons\*. A great clerical party developed the idea of independence—upon which all ecclesiastical union necessarily reposes—until it reached the character of hostility against the Crown; and was supported in the attempt by the richest and most powerful prince in the world, as well as by chiefs and leaders of the hierarchy.

With all these the contest of the new Prince was more severe than that of his predecessor. The religious party had been formed, expressly in opposition to Henry of Navarre, but other adversaries also arose against him. The first question laid before him affected his connection with his confederates.

The Royalists, who had adhered to Henry III., did so because they were convinced of the soundness of his Catholicism, and that they might expect from him the preservation of the Catholic religion in the kingdom. Now however they gave expression to the fiercest opposition against the Huguenot who was making preparations to take possession of the throne of the Most Christian kings.

A few monks, with torches in their hands, were performing their ceremonies over the body of the

\* Commentarii : " I ricchi e potenti delle città pensarono a una institutione di repubbliche in loco di monarchia, et li nobili aveano la mira di aver delle satrapie particolari."



murdered King, when the new monarch, accompanied by his most trustworthy attendants, with his cuirass however under his doublet, entered the chamber. He was not received with any acclamation ; those present, who had all belonged to the household of Henry III., spoke amongst themselves in a state of high excitement : they were seen to clench their hands and pull their hats down over their faces. They swore that they would rather surrender to the Leaguers at Paris than acknowledge a Huguenot king, and this they said aloud within a few paces of him, so that he must have heard their words.

Henry at the first moment feared that the Catholics in the camp would unite against him with the people of Paris, and there was in fact a meeting in the city of the chiefs on both sides, and a common consultation proposed, so that Henry's friends recommended him to withdraw himself, with his trusty Huguenots, from the rage of the enemy, until the approach of more favourable times.

Had he done so however, he would have given up at the very first moment the claim to the sovereign authority, the possession of which devolved upon him by the law of the nation, and have failed in his duty to maintain that authority ; but it soon became evident that there was no reason to fear a union between the Royalist Catholics and the Catholics of the League. Mayenne would hear no-

thing of the proposed meeting, and it is difficult to see how the Royalists could have made common cause with those amongst whose number had been the murderer of the King. They contemplated rather avenging that deed upon their adversaries.

It was always a circumstance of importance that there were in the camp so many Swiss attached to the European anti-League interests. They were more attached to Henry IV., who shared their creed, than to his predecessor, and did not hesitate, upon the requisition of Sancy, who had hitherto led them, to acknowledge the new King.

They were however foreigners and Protestants, and had no power to decide the principal question. This depended upon the resolution of the Council, which had assisted Henry III., and through which the royal authority had been administered. From this council all public ordinances had hitherto issued. It was invested with great authority, from the fact that it consisted not merely of ministers, but of the most powerful political and military chiefs.

It has been stated, upon credible authority, that the opinions of the Council in reference to the hereditary right were in a few instances somewhat unexpected\*; that the remoteness of the relation-

\* We are not sufficiently informed concerning the particulars of these transactions. Angoulême required to be much more full, in order to justify his pretension to a thorough investigation

ship between the King of Navarre and the house of Valois was discussed, and the proposition made that at first he should only be acknowledged as chief director of the war. But even in the midst of the greatest disorder and confusion, those laws which prescribe limits to the desires of individuals make their influence felt. One of the chief causes of this war was the refusal of Henry III. to subject the fundamental law of legitimate succession according to birthright, to the pretensions of the Church. Those therefore who had drawn the sword to maintain this fundamental principle, could not deny its practical application at the very first moment it became practicable.

It was another thing however with the difference of religion. Henry III. had assumed that his successor would come over to Catholicism. A separation of the crown from its old union with Catholicism did not appear admissible to him or to his adherents. The latter now lost no time in demanding that the lawful heir to the throne should make this change without delay. They gave two special reasons for this: the one, that if it were not complied with, a great number of their present confederates would go over to the League; the other,

of the matter. Dupleix and Mathieu contain some particulars, but they are guided by the discourse of Sancy, whose truth I do not question, but who maintains merely a special and personal position.

that the rights of sovereignty might perhaps be exercised by the new king in favour of the Huguenots : from these dangers they urged him to secure himself.

Henry's decision of this great question, the influence of which extended far beyond the fleeting moment and the men then living, was not to be embraced definitively, but only provisionally.

Had the object to be effected been merely his recognition as first prince of the blood, he would never on that account have changed his religion, for the duty of self-preservation would have always predominated over every other. The crown was a higher prize, and Henry may have said then or subsequently that it was worth a mass. But the right thereto which had now immediately fallen to him imposed on him a more comprehensive duty : he must save royalty in the midst of the general confusion, in order that the whole nation might once more unite round it ; he ought not to reject the only means by which this could be effected, unless his religious convictions were essentially opposed to the change.

To his companions in arms, who urged it upon him, he declared, as he had already frequently hinted, that the religion which he had professed in his youth he might probably give up in his manhood ; not however upon compulsion, not from the force of violent pressure, but only if he should be better

instructed. He gave some expectation of his accepting such instructions from a national council, to be called within six months,—a doubtful promise, and but of slight obligation, according to the significance of the words, but at the same time of profound meaning. The legitimate hereditary King did not reject the notion that the Crown must be indissolubly united with Catholicism. His Protestantism was neither so well defined nor so immoveable as to prevent him from making so strong a theoretic approximation. Besides this, Henry allowed two other generally restrictive practical obligations to be imposed on him. He promised to allow the exercise of the Protestant religion in those places only where it might have taken place by virtue of the last agreement with Henry III.; and, further, to fill the offices about to be vacated with professors of the Catholic creed only. In order to understand Henry's proceedings at this time, we must remember that the party with which he came to this understanding was not that of the League, which persecuted the Huguenots for life and death; but rather the middle political party, with which he had always been in alliance. They were the ruling party, with more or less consciousness, in the council, in the army, and in the anti-parliaments constituted by Henry III. at Caen, Romans, and Tours. The Council, which had hitherto exercised the royal authority, controlled all these; it adopted the

King, rather than subjected itself to him and to his designs\*.

Thus was a union established between the legitimate royalty which had devolved upon a Protestant, and the Catholic Royalists. It was however only a very loose connection,—one that contemplated a distant object, and a preparation for future power, rather than a foundation for present authority. Who could say whether it would ever consolidate itself into such an authority? The agreement by no means satisfied all those who had hitherto fought together. The most powerful of the magnates of the day, Epernon, quitted the camp, and it was a matter of satisfaction that he did not immediately join the League, as many others did.

The military undertaking in which the army was engaged was given up of necessity. In the first sitting of the Council it was proposed to proceed with the beleaguering of Paris; but, with so many secessions from his side, Henry could not consent to that enterprise. He said he would first with-

\* In the Collection of Sillery there is a letter, directed to the Swiss from the members of the Council, in which these views are expressed. They have acknowledged "nostre dit Roy estre légitime successeur, et que le droit naturel nous obligeoit à lui rendre fidélité et obéissance. Nous aurions, en lui prestant le serment, pourvu à la seureté et conservation de nostre religion Catholique par la promesse qu'il nous auroit faiste, par lui signée et jurée, de n'y rien innover, ainsi la maintenir et conserver;" by which even the damage otherwise to be expected from despair was warded off from religion.

draw beyond some of the rivers, and then he would be able to give his confidence to those who remained steady to him. A portion of his troops marched to Champagne, another to Picardy, and with the third Henry betook himself to Normandy, where he was acknowledged by Caen, Dieppe, and Pont-de-l'Arche. It was a vast advantage to him that he was not at the other side of the Loire, hemmed in in the distant south, but that he had a firm footing in the north of the kingdom ; still this was very far from being what his title indicated him to be—King of France ; and his enemies had already placed in opposition to him another, whose claims to the same title they acknowledged.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## CAMPAIGN OF 1589 AND 1590.

THE population of Paris, on the intelligence of the death of Henry III., abandoned themselves to joy and hopes. The authority of the preachers was augmented by the event, since the Prince, whom they had overwhelmed with their curses, had been actually destroyed in accordance with their predictions. They spoke of Jacques Clément as a martyr, and likened him to Judith. They declared every one to be excommunicated who should acknowledge Henry of Navarre.

But, as in the camp, so in the city, the adoption of a great resolution was now indispensable. The Duke of Mayenne was nominated Lieutenant-General of the kingdom and of the crown of France in opposition to the living King, after whose death the office was not to continue.

It was even very seriously discussed whether Mayenne, disregarding the old and infirm Cardinal,

should not declare himself king: by the boldness of such a step he was told he would carry away the Nobility and the Estates, and unite all France around him. In Mayenne's council however it was thought that such a step was surrounded with too many difficulties, and above all that the Spanish ambassador's opinion upon it must be heard.

This ambassador was Don Bernardino de Mendoza, who was once compelled to leave England because Queen Elizabeth found his presence too dangerous for the peace of the kingdom. He lived and moved exclusively in the great Catholic combination which embraced Europe. The failure of the attempt upon England in 1588 deterred him as little as it did his master from contemplating a second. The annihilation of the heretics in the Netherlands, the union of the English crown with the other Spanish crowns, the settlement of France in a similar manner,—all these were to him objects which it was desirable to accomplish, either simultaneously, or one after another\*. He had already remarked how necessary a condition it was of the possession of America by Spain, that England

\* "Estirpar las heregias en desarraigarlas de los Paises Baxos, y ganar la Inglaterra (empresa que no puede impedir Francia en el estado que se vee), lo uno (the Netherlands) patrimonio y lo otro (England) conquista, que se puede tan justamente encorporar con las demás coronas . . . en beneficio de las de Espana, para la conservacion de las de Indias, que hereges no poseen á Inglaterra."—Papers of Simancas.

should not remain in the hands of heretics. In order to maintain in France a condition consonant with these views, he did not consider any expense too great. The rigid Catholic principle, from which he derived all his notions, and which led him to a political orthodoxy, from the consequences of which there was no escape ; the power of the prince whom he represented ; a natural talent for popularity, and finally the money he expended, secured for him an overwhelming influence.

When the attack upon the city was apprehended, he repaired to the walls, which he found full of monks and priests, and told them he would die with them. Upon receiving intelligence that the Béarnais, as he always called Henry of Navarre, had assumed the title of King of France, he paid the Duke of Mayenne a visit, and declared to him officially, as Spanish ambassador, that his master would never recognize a heretic as King of France ; and at the same time he offered on the part of his master to the French Catholics all the power of his kingdom, in order to prevent such a succession to the throne\*.

The proposal which was now made however—that in constituting the League such a political power

\* Mendoza's Letter to Philip, August 8 : he had declared "que V. Md. de ninguna manera permittiria que esta corona viniessen en manos de hereges, y que como Ambr. suyo ofreceria á el y á los demas Catolicos deste reyno sus fuerças y armas para impedirlo."—Papers of Simancas.

as was necessary under present circumstances, no further notice should be taken of the Cardinal of Bourbon, but rather that Mayenne himself should be left in possession of the power which he might exercise under the authority of the King of Spain—was one with which Mendoza was not at first inclined to concur.

He did not wish the Cardinal of Bourbon to be put aside, because in the original bond of the confederacy he had been described as the future King of France, and in that capacity had taken upon himself definite obligations, especially in reference to Béarn. Mendoza did not consider it advisable to urge the immediate submission of the French to the King of Spain, for he believed that they would perceive by-and-by, that without such submission they would be unable to destroy heresy in France,—that it was, in fact, their only means of safety. The French, in his opinion, must be dealt with as the physician treats his patient: the most nutritious food must not be permitted at first, in order to restore his strength, but that which is weaker and better suited to his powers of digestion\*.

The more cautious of the French Leaguers also

\* To this, he writes, his King had moved him: “*El considerar, que el nombrar al Cardinale pour Rey no derogasse los contratos secretos de Bearne y Cambray, que se hicieron quando la Liga en favor de V. Md. ni la pretension de V. Md. al ducado de Borgoña, ni la de la Señora Infanta al ducado de Bretagna.*”—Compare Villeroy, *Mém.* i. 130.

declared themselves in favour of this view, though upon different grounds. They found that it concurred with the resolutions of the last Estates, which they were of opinion should be firmly adhered to. One of the ministers of Henry III., during the earlier part of his reign, and perhaps the ablest of them all, Villeroy, had now a seat in Mayenne's council. He was opposed to Mayenne's arbitrary proceedings, and declared that he would separate from him if he should attempt to disturb the arrangements already effected.

Urged by representations on both sides, Mayenne at length yielded. The Cardinal of Bourbon was proclaimed King, under the title of Charles X., in solemn edicts, by the Parliament, the Council of the Union, and the civic authorities. Thus was the public authority in some measure arranged, but unquestionably in a most anomalous form.

A prince was acknowledged as king, whose right was doubtful, and who was himself a poor prisoner, in the power of the very man he was set up to oppose. His substitute was a powerful magnate, who was himself only deterred by the difficulty of the enterprise, from stretching forth his own hand to the crown, and who was at the same time dependent upon foreign subsidies. Henry of Guise had received at one time or another three millions in gold from Spain; the Duke of Mayenne also had already received about eight hundred thousand gold-scudi.

Without this money, neither would the former have been able to elevate himself to the authority he had possessed, nor the latter to maintain himself in the position he occupied. It had always been the principal object of their solicitude, to have the Spanish money placed in their own hands, and not to have it distributed immediately amongst their companions in arms, lest such a course should weaken their personal authority.

It was upon this very connection, above all others, that the influence of the Spanish ambassador rested; yet he agreed with Mayenne in generalities only; he did not pursue any object which could be properly called French, his aim was altogether of a universal character—the dominion of the rigorous Catholic idea, and still more of that of his King, over the whole world. He was mysterious and subtle in his proceedings, and immovable in his designs, for the accomplishment of which he neglected no means. The clergy and the mob were dependent upon him: the former for the sake of the clerical maxims; and the latter, tumultuous and moveable, more eager for freedom than capable of appreciating it, easier to be induced to submit to privations than to yield contributions, and perfectly content that these should be made by others.

However little this deserved the name of an organization, it yet had the superiority of power in the beginning. The army which left Paris in order to

take the field in September, 1589, and which was composed of Swiss and Germans collected together by means of Spanish money, might have amounted to about twenty thousand men. Mayenne boasted that the Béarnais must either fling himself into the sea, or he would in a short time lead him in chains through the Faubourg St. Antoine\*. In Henry IV. however he found an enemy who was not only prepared for the worst, and determined to defend himself to the very last, but also one who, beneath the appearance of levity and carelessness, possessed a profound, almost religious conviction of his rights. It was no mere phrase with Henry, when he replied to a friend who drew his attention to the disproportion of his force compared with that of his enemies, that they must take his allies into consideration—God, and his good right. But he was at the same time a captain, who lived and moved in his camp,—all effort, nerve, and courage. Behind his intrenchments at Arques, which he had thrown up with skill, and which he frequently defended himself, pike in hand, he was invincible, even when assailed by a force four times stronger than his own. The enemy found himself compelled to give way

\* The ‘*Vrai Discours de ce qui s'est passé en l'armée jusqu'à la fin de 1589*, Mém. de la Ligue, iv. 49, contains an original and contemporary narrative of this circumstance: it is given nearly verbatim in Cayet's ‘*Histoire Novennaire*,’ as well as in the ‘*Histoire des Troubles*,’ of Mathieu. Thuanus, 97–319, rests upon it also, and is frequently only a translation.

before Henry, not only at Arques, but also at Dieppe, where a previous attempt had been made.

It soon came to Henry's turn to take the initiative. The military men whom he had left before Paris now drew round him in greater numbers; the English supported him, and by these means he found himself strong enough to appear once more in the open field. In the beginning of November he approached Paris again, and took possession of a portion of the suburbs, and even his enemies were of opinion that it was possible for him to force the city to a surrender\*. But his little army would have lost itself in the mazes of Paris, and his views lay not in that direction. His idea was first of all only to get possession of the towns on the Loire, which had always been steadily attached to his predecessors. Meanwhile he had the satisfaction of being recognized, more solemnly than hitherto, as King of France by the parliament of Tours, and at the same time by a European power, the republic of Venice. After he had cleared Anjou and Maine of the Leaguers, and taken fresh assurance of Epernon's peaceable intentions, he directed his course once more towards the north of France. He relieved and besieged towns, he conquered some, others he lost again, but upon the whole the advantage was his. His friends remarked with admiration and astonishment that

\* Commentarii: "Se havesse fatto un poco di sforzo, haverrebbe presa la città."

within the space of two months he had traversed with his artillery one hundred and forty leagues. In the beginning of February he commenced the investment of Dreux.

For a town so thoroughly devoted to the League, Mayenne felt that he must venture something, especially since its fall would have endangered the capital. At the order of the King of Spain some Italian and Spanish troops, as well as some heavy Low Country cavalry and Walloon hackbutteers, marched to his assistance from the Netherlands; he therefore resolved to risk a battle.

In Paris the doctrine that there could be no communion with heretics, was renewed, and on the special ground that the Church had even commanded that they should be put to death. In the camp of Henry IV., on the other hand, both Catholics and Protestants prayed for the legitimate King. In the districts which obeyed him processions took place as well as preachings. Henry himself regarded the coming conflict as the medium of God's judgement, almost in the same manner as the ancient Franks at Fontenoy. He prayed that God might bless his arms if it should conduce to the welfare of France and of the Christian world, but, if otherwise, not to give him success.

On the 14th of March, 1590, the two armies approached each other upon the plains of Yvry. A battle ensued, in which, although the resources of

modern warfare were brought into operation, the decisive force consisted, as of old, in the cavalry. It appeared as if Henry IV. must succumb to the superior force of the enemy: further and further backward was his white banner seen to retire, and the great mass appeared as if they designed to follow it. At length Henry cried out that those who did not wish to fight against the enemy might at least turn and see him die\*, and immediately plunged into the thickest of the battle. It appeared as if the Royalist gentry had felt the old martial fire of their ancestry enkindled by these words and by the glance that accompanied them: raising one mighty shout to God, they threw themselves upon the enemy, following their King, whose plume was now their banner. In this there might have been some dim principle of religious zeal, but that devotion to personal authority, which is so powerful an element in war and in policy, was wanting. The royalist and religious energy of Henry's troops conquered the Leaguers. The cavalry were broken, scattered, and swept from the field, and the confused manner of their retreat so perplexed the infantry that they were not able to maintain their ground; the German and French were cut down; the Swiss surrendered. It was a complete victory for Henry IV.

\* So in the 'Discours Véritable,' from which Cayet derives his notices; his variations seem to be arbitrary. The best description by far is in the 'Mémoires de M. Duplessis-Mornay,' ii. 55.

"We have," said the King in one of his letters, "broken through the enemy, dispersed his cavalry, taken his infantry prisoners, and captured his cannon and his white banner. How roughly we have handled his Burgundians! (meaning the Spanish Netherlanders;) God has shown that he favours right more than power\*.

The letters and poems in which others announce this victory sound like one great shout of triumph. Du Bartas composed an excellent and elaborate politico-religious admonition to the enemy in his military song of victory†. Henry IV. now directed his course towards the capital in real earnest. It was, according to an expression of the time, the black in the target at which he aimed. By means of the garrisons of Mantes and Vernon he had interrupted the connection between Paris and Normandy. Soon after he took Corbeil upon the upper Seine, which was regarded as the key by which the city was supplied from the interior. He then captured Lagny, by which he was enabled to close the Marne, and Creil, by which the Oise was commanded. By the end of April the bridge of Charenton was in his hands, and his cannon planted upon Montmartre. The Parisians, he said, were

\* "Dieu a déterminé selon son équité."—*Receuil de Lettres Miss. de Henri IV.*, tom. iii. p. 169. "Dieu a montré qu'il aimait mieux le droit que la force."—To De la Noue, March 14, 1590, p. 161.

† *Cantique sur la Victoire d'Yvry : Œuvres*, 687.

disobedient children : so he must show them the rod in one hand and the apple in the other, and then they would yield to him. He could not conceive how they could prefer to him, in the bloom of masculine vigour, with a victorious army before their gates, the old Spaniard, already broken with deadly diseases, Philip II., at a distance, whose death was approaching, and whose kingdom after that event must fall in pieces.

Before the battle many of the affluent inhabitants of the city, and even a few members of the Government, had given expression to similar sentiments\*, but the old hatred animated the mass of the people with undiminished power. It was said that Henry IV. would come and take vengeance for St. Bartholomew's Day, and bathe his arms to the elbows in blood. The new Papal Legate, Gaetano, whose views coincided with those of Mendoza, caused the oath of union to be renewed just before the battle, after a solemn religious service by all the city officials, from the *Prévôt des Marchands* down to the standard-bearers in the different quarters. They swore never to acknowledge a king who should not be a Catholic, and

\* Letter of Mendoza, March 5 : " Siendo los ricos deste lugar los que mas dessean el accordarse con Bearne, y los de mediano estado y commun pueblo son contrarios á ello y fervientes en la defensa de la religion." May 6, he remarks, " Yr crescendo en los mas principales siempre el deseo de accordarse en que inclinan los mas que tienen voz en cosejo y mano en el governo."

the population of the quarters repeated the oath. The theological faculty declared that Henry of Bourbon, even should he receive ecclesiastical absolution, could never be acknowledged as King; and they held by this opinion now during the progress of the siege. The distress caused by it in the city only helped to exalt the influence of the Spanish clerical party. The monastic orders made extraordinary efforts for the support of the poor, and the impression these made was doubled by the emaciated figures of the monks as they were seen coming out of their cloisters. Bernardino Mendoza sold his plate to purchase bread for the poor; as the scarcity became more intense, he taught the people how to make food from oats, after the manner of the Scotch: he caused great cauldrons to be set up before his own house for cooking oatmeal porridge, and thus preserved the lives of thousands. As he passed through the streets he was greeted with cheers for the King of Spain. In May intelligence arrived that the Cardinal of Bourbon was dead; and the effect of this upon the population was to revive, with redoubled power, their wish to subject themselves to the King of Spain.

The opposite ideas however exhibited themselves also. A Huguenot woman wandered through the streets, and reproached the monks with their sins. She would no longer wear anything red, because the Legate appeared in clothing of that colour. She

sang her psalms with a loud voice, and the clergy, who tried to stop her, were astonished at her knowledge of the Scriptures; she poured out her aspirations in the most vehement and beautiful prayers; she asserted that she had seen a human figure in the clouds, with a sword in his hand, and that he had commanded her to tell the Duchess of Montpensier that she ought not to use paint, and the Cardinal Legate that he ought to make peace. She was one of the most beautiful women in Paris, and closed her career by dying in the hospital\*. Amongst the multitude the Catholic and Spanish notions retained their great predominance.

In the beginning of August the famine had become so intolerable, that it was resolved in the city to send a deputation to Henry IV. The object was not so much to propose submission to his demands, as a general pacification, in which the King of Spain should be included. Henry IV. answered, that he did not wish his subjects to be indebted to the King of Spain for the peace they desired†.

The chief cause of the resolution which the peo-

\* L'Etoile, ii. 40.

† "Recueil de ce qui s'est passé en la Conférence du Sr. A. de Gondi et Archevêque de Lyon avec le Roi."—Mém. de la Ligue, iv. 317. Corneyo's 'Discours bref et véritable des choses plus notables arrivées au siège de Paris,' is credible as far as concerns what was spoken publicly, but the manner in which he mentions this mission shows that he was unacquainted with the negotiations themselves.

ple maintained, was the intelligence promulgated by the preachers, that the prospect of Spanish assistance was near. Yet this assistance was constantly retarded, almost to the despair of Mendoza. At length, in the most critical and urgent moment, it appeared.

Philip II. had given money and enlisted foreign troops; he had also, again, sent a force of his own. Now he did more: he ordered his nephew Alexander Farnese, of Parma, who was then engaged in subjugating the Netherlands, to postpone his proceedings in that country, and to march into France with his whole army.

As regarded himself, Alexander Farnese was not favourable to such a step. According to his view, France and Spain ought to maintain friendly relations, and for a hostile movement against Henry IV. the present moment appeared to him, at least, unsuited. Besides this, he intended, in the course of the summer, which was very dry, and therefore favourable for his operations, to make an attempt upon Holland and Zealand. It was impossible for him however at the same time to invade France and to overpower the Netherlands, and should he attempt both objects, he would be unable to attain either of them. At the Spanish court meanwhile that vast complication of all the Catholic interests was the object of steady contemplation. King Philip and his Council of State fostered moreover

the opinion that Spain could never have peace with Henry of Navarre. Should he win Paris, and with the city the crown, nothing could in that case prevent him from rushing with his Huguenots, intoxicated with victory, upon the Netherlands, or Italy, or even upon Spain itself; while by attacking him in France, the Netherlands would be most effectually defended\*. The Duke of Parma was somewhat displeased that the necessities of the war should be judged and decided by the cabinet at a distance from the scene of operations; but when the will of the King was decisively announced, and the necessary funds sent, he had no alternative but to obey.

He first of all put Mayenne's army, which had not let itself be shut up within the walls of Paris, into a condition for taking the field, and then he himself passed the French borders in the middle of August, 1590.

He was received everywhere as the principal leader of the League, and the money destined for its support passed entirely through his hands; upon

\* For this I have drawn from 'Gulielmi Dondini Bononiensis e Soc. Jesu Historia de rebus in Galliâ gestis ab Alexandro Farnesio, Parmae et Placentiae Duce III., supremo Belgii prefecto, (Nuremberg, 1675), p. 118, who had valuable sources of information; according to page 259 he had access to the Diary of Alexander of Parma. "Hispani triumviri (namely Mendoza, Moreo, and Tassis) ita cum foederatis agebant ut ad Alexandrum referrent omnia, communicatisque inde consiliis communes ad Regem literas darent; quæ nobis literæ ad intima consiliorum pernoscenda adjumento fuere."

his approach to Laon, the keys of the city were presented to him upon a silver salver. On the way to Meaux, he was met at Lizy by Mayenne, and a general review of their troops took place; the numbers of the army amounted to seventeen thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry\*. The Spaniards showed a certain military elegance which astonished the French, and many of them seemed to be aware, for the first time, that there was a civilized world beyond the boundaries of France. The united army now moved in the direction of Paris. Alexander Farnese was commissioned either to relieve the city, or, if he should find it already captured, to seek out the enemy amidst its smoking ruins.

But his mere approach was decisive, and the inhabitants of Paris were astonished when, on the morning of the 30th of August, the enemy was no longer

\* "Spectaculi frequentia major ad oppidum Lisiaci fuit, ubi ut lustraretur federatorum exercitus primi et secundi agminis copiae inter Farnesium et Maineum . . . convenerant."—*De rebus in Gallia gestis ab Alex. Farnesio*, p. 218. Tassis, who did not know the name of the place, describes it as "pagus quidam, qui est in mediâ quasi Meautii viâ," *i.e.* between Meaux and La Ferté Milon. (*De Tassis, Commentarii*, p. 505.) We see here also how difficult it is to ascertain numbers. Tassis, in a letter dated Lagny, September 3, gives the army of the prince at 12,000 infantry and 2400 cavalry, and that of Mayenne at 6000 infantry and 2000 cavalry; the musters were not complete. Tassis remarks that so powerful an army had not been seen in France since the last great war (1559); he calculates the army of the King at 16,000 infantry and 4000 cavalry; others make the cavalry amount to 7000.

visible before the city. All rushed to the walls, in order to convince themselves of the fact; some immediately joined processions, which were formed without delay; others betook themselves to the camp, where they rejoiced at finding a few tents not altogether empty, whilst innumerable waggons, laden with supplies of provisions, covered all the roads leading to the gates of Paris in unbroken lines.

Henry had found it impossible to continue the beleaguering of the city, and at the same time to withstand the advancing enemy. The latter object appeared to him the most urgent and promising, and he therefore broke up his camp, determined to force the Duke of Parma to a battle in the open field. Henry's infantry was not quite so numerous, and far from being in as good condition as that of the enemy, but he placed all his hopes in the superiority of his cavalry. There were in his camp four thousand French gentlemen, who wished for a pitched battle with no less eagerness than their ancestors in the old Flemish and English wars. Henry IV., who himself ventured very close to the enemy, in order to observe his movements, encamped upon the heights of Chelles, directly opposite to him, and in his way. He felt himself fortunate when he saw a detachment from the enemy take post upon the opposite heights on the morning of the 2nd of December, and putting themselves in order as if determined to accept the

battle. He believed that he saw the Star of Yvry beaming upon him. We perceive from his letters that his whole soul was resolved upon the impending event,—that he was fully determined to keep his ground, and to die rather than yield to the enemy. With these intentions he advanced into the plain, in order to give the enemy a better opportunity of commencing the attack.

It had never been Farnese's intention however, although he was vehemently urged to it by the impatience of the French Leaguers, to risk the fate of the whole enterprise upon one battle. He was not indebted for his previous successes to the fortune of the battle-field, but to well-chosen positions in strongly fortified places, skilful movements, and persevering sieges. Although the constituent elements of both armies had much in common, yet were they almost the representatives of two distinct systems of tactics, standing opposed to each other. In the army of the King the chief strength consisted in the French nobility, who came into the field voluntarily, and, without pay, attached themselves to the service of their lawful sovereign with unconditional devotedness, and thirsted for the renown of battle only. The strength of Farnese's army consisted, on the other hand, in paid veteran troops,—Spanish, Walloon, Italian, and German regiments, which constituted a firmly united and easily directed military body. The object of the

Duke's movements was merely to occupy the King and meanwhile to capture Lagny, one of the most important places in his possession, and which prevented the approach of supplies to Paris by the Marne, as well as from the camp. Having succeeded in this, he coolly left things to take their course. He remained immovable, even when Henry made a rapid movement upon Paris, and attempted an assault upon the suburbs ; he knew well that that could lead to nothing further. Henry meanwhile could not sustain a war of this kind ; his talent was not developed for it, and the condition of his troops rendered it impossible. The impatience of the nobility to leave the army, now that the prospect of a battle, which they desired so eagerly, and which had drawn them together, vanished, was equal to their former alacrity\*. The letters remain in which they represent to their king and leader how much they had done for him, what losses they had suffered, and how necessary it was for them to return to their homes for the purpose of ordering their domestic affairs, and promising to return to him again. Henry IV. knew by experience that it would be vain to endeavour to withstand such a desire, and therefore, although

\* To Montmorency, October 8, Lettr. Miss. iii. 266 : " C'est une humeur que je ne suis pas à cette heure de reconnaître, m'estant aperçu assez de fois qu'ils n'en reviennent jamais et ne sert rien de les y contredire." In the semi-official narratives he rather seeks to conceal the true reason.

it was but the middle of December, he divided his army. He dismissed the nobility to their several provinces ; with the auxiliaries he garrisoned the fortified places, and a body of select troops he kept by himself in order to maintain the petty war to which his operations were reduced. In this manner did the campaign, in despite of all his efforts and victories, turn out to his disadvantage. A few simple observations will show how large and overwhelming a share the Spaniards had in bringing about these results. Bernardino Mendoza held the Parisians together during the siege. The arrival of the Prince of Parma raised the siege of the capital, and his strategic movements occasioned the dissolution of the royal army. In Paris preparations were made, by the advice of Mayenne, to receive the victorious general with the greatest festivities ; and many a lady flattered herself with the prospect of making a conquest of the hero around whom beamed the double glory of victory and religion. Alexander of Parma withdrew from it all. Once only, and that *incognito*, did he visit the city. It was enough for him that by the conquest of Corbeil he had made the Seine free, and thus provided for the supply of provisions to the capital. Having accomplished that, he directed his march once more towards the Netherlands. Henry followed him on his return, and occasioned him some loss. He had maintained his position in the provinces, and now

again took possession of Corbeil, and conquered Chartres, but he was not yet king of France, nor could he by any means be regarded as the first military leader in the world, as his flatterers would have had him to believe.

He said that it was money only which made the difference between him and the Prince of Parma, and that with better pecuniary resources he would also have been able to maintain his army in the field.

It is very certain that an army like that of the Spaniards, and a general like the Prince of Parma, would have been impossible without regular pay. The silver of Potosi contributed to develope the spirit of standing armies in Europe; but an organized state system, and stable political arrangements, were also necessary to it. At this period how greatly did the Spanish monarchy appear to transcend the French kingdom!—the former embracing South America, Eastern Asia, the Pyrenean and Apennine peninsulas, proceeding on the continent from victory to victory, united by a great principle, armed and prepared in the best manner; the latter, without subordination, troops, or money, torn with internal contentions, vacillating between two religious parties. After the Duke of Parma's successes, things wore in part an appearance as if the French kingdom were about to be absorbed in the system of the Spanish monarchy, and to become a dependency of the Spanish crown.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

PREPONDERANCE OF THE SPANIARDS IN FRANCE.  
—PRINCIPLES OF THE LEAGUE AND OF SPAIN.

BERNARDINO MENDOZA had formed the design of making France a province of the great Catholic monarchic system, which, under his king, was to govern Europe and the colonies.

Since the death of Henry III. the idea of making the King of Spain Protector of France had been mentioned in all the negotiations with Mayenne, who in general appeared to concur in the proposal. A formal act was already prepared and submitted for signature. The negotiations were especially difficult with regard to defining the rights of the Protector. Mendoza required that he should have almost sovereign authority. The Minister of the Protector was to take part in the Council in affairs of state, of war, and of finance; and, after the death of Charles X., the succession to the throne was to be regulated in accordance with the

will of the Protector, whose rights were still to continue\*.

It is easy to conceive that though Mayenne and his council, especially Villeroy, might make some difficulty in subscribing to articles which involved their own subordination to the Spanish ambassador, Mendoza did not give up his object on that account; he still hoped to accomplish it through the aid of the multitude.

From Mendoza's letters we learn the nature and mode of his diplomatic demagogic activity. The members of the civic association and the *Prévôt des Marchands* used to visit him, in order to ask for his advice. His transactions with them were however very cautious. What he wished to accomplish he never proposed as his own idea; "for the French," said he, "are jealous of everything that does not come from themselves†". He spoke to

\* "Punctos que se apuntaron para concierto en las juntas que ha avido entre el Duque de Umaine y nosotros;" in the papers of Simancas. The first clause indicates, "que el partito Catolico pede la proteccion de S. M. como remedio unico de su salvacion;" another, "que se pongan en ejecucion los puntos á que obliga la Liga;" in the same manner the promises concerning Béarn. Further, "Anadierasse á esto la intervencion de ministros del Protector en los consejos de estado guerra y hacienda; la obligacion de nunca tratar ó determinar cosa de la sucesion del reyno en caso de muerte del Cardinal sin intervencion del Protector, et estendar á proteccion en cabeza de la corona de España." I leave it undecided, whether Mendoza actually proposed all this in so many words.

† Mendoza, October 30, 1589. The disposition of the nation

them of what he wished to propose, as if it were a report he had heard. His friends then repeated it in the meetings of their party; and, in a short time, others made their appearance at his residence, to lay before him as something they deemed advisable the very opinion that had at first proceeded from himself. He then spoke in favour of it, and the matter was afterwards debated in the more numerous assemblies, where it assumed by degrees the form of a resolution. Mendoza swayed the members of the Sorbonne in a special manner: they were, at that time, men of little learning or intellect; but they possessed a certain fluency of speech, and in that their whole talent consisted: they thus furthered his views. His influence was all the more effective, the more completely it was concealed.

Soon after the re-appearance of Henry IV. in the suburbs of Paris, on which occasion a few of his adherents had displayed some activity, the question was examined in the assemblies of the League, whose chief and fundamental principle it was that under no circumstances could a reconciliation take place with him, in what manner they could defend themselves against him by force. It was observed, that for this purpose, there were only two resources, either to unite all the French Catholics, or to entrust

was “estar sospechoso del extraniero, por mas que aya menester su amistad, no satisfaciéndoles nada que no sea de su nacion.”

themselves wholly to the King of Spain ; and that as the former was unattainable, on account of the oblivion into which the interests of religion had fallen with so many, the latter only remained, and they must assure themselves of the King of Spain's protection. Here, too, it was proposed that King Philip II. should in all form be named Protector of France\*. Objections were not wanting to this course, but they were all removed by Mendoza and his friends.

It was objected that King Philip would introduce the Spanish Inquisition, fill the offices of the state with foreigners, demand unusual subsidies, and oppress the country with his troops ; that he might perhaps make himself master of the French towns, and that there would be a danger of the entire nobility's renouncing his authority.

To this it was answered that the boards of hearth-money were more severe than the Spanish Inquisition ; the native troops often more violent than the Spanish ; as to other attempts, they could be warded off by means of the Estates General ; and that, as to the French towns, they had more to fear from England than from Spain. Amongst many of the French, whose religious feelings were excited to a high pitch, ecclesiastical zeal so com-

\* "Incommodez, qu'aucuns disent pouvoir advenir si on appelle l'Espagnol comme protecteur de nostre Roy et royaume." 1589 : Archives of Simaneas.

pletely predominated over their wonted national ambition, that they could calmly contemplate the possibility of a great loss of territory. With less extent, it was said, the kingdom, if once purged from atheism and heresy, would be able to do more for itself, and to contribute more to the welfare of Christendom than it otherwise could, even if it possessed all Asia\*.

There was still one cause of hesitation ; the possibility that by adopting this course the French might fall under the government of the Spaniards. Mendoza endeavoured to remove it by saying that the administration of a great monarchy was conducted something like the government of a monastic order, which was constituted out of many nations, though united under one head. An Italian guardian could not issue orders to the French ; nor a French to the Germans ; each brother was a foreigner to all who were not of his nation, and yet all unanimously acknowledged the supreme chief of the Order. The Constitution of Spain, he said, was similar to this ; and that to the great advantage of the provinces. It was manifest, for example, that the 'county' of Burgundy was more prosperous under the Spanish government than the

\* "Quand le royaume seroit de moindre étendue qu'il n'est, si est ce qu'étant repurgé d'hérésie et d'athéisme, il pourroit plus faire de bien à la république et à soi-même, qu'il ne pouvait faire avec la corruption présente quand il seroit plus grand que toute l'Asie."

'duchy' of Burgundy under that of France; and that the inhabitants of Artois were in better circumstances than those of Picardy. It is in fact extremely probable that the condition of the neighbouring French-speaking Spanish provinces, which was in general satisfactory, lent weight to the representations of Mendoza; at all events he succeeded in bringing the citizens by degrees to a complete adoption of his opinions.

He hoped that he would be able to win the Catholic nobility also, and reckoned especially upon the example and influence of the Count de Brissac, for the accomplishment of that object. He recommended him to the King for a reward, and also the *Prévôt des Marchands*, who had formed a party through his friends amongst the citizens. He recommended the citizens simply to guard themselves against the nobility, but not to arouse the ancient hostilities, which might be in the highest degree ruinous.

The question was discussed very seriously with Mayenne and his council. The Duke attached great importance to his being acknowledged as the head of his house, and once actually said that he would be an obedient subject to King Philip II. The other members of the council, which he had recently formed, gave the prominence to general principles. They were not opposed to the recognition of Philip II. as Protector of France; but they

required that he should then come forward, not merely as an ally, but formally as generalissimo, and take the cause entirely into his own hands, Mendoza answered, that that would occasion such prodigious expense, that the King could not in return be content with being simply acknowledged as Protector, but must require certain prerogatives of sovereignty. The French hesitated to bind themselves to a definitive confirmation of such rights; they remarked that all which Philip did for France conduced to the advantage of the Catholic religion, and so far to his own advantage. Mendoza answered, that the cause must, beyond all comparison, be of more interest to the French; he presumed they did not wish to cease to be Catholics, or that they desired to abandon Paris to the enemy; but where, he asked, was the man amongst them, who could at the same time preserve religion and the state?

Mendoza had no doubt but that he would at length attain his object. Sometimes he appears full of enthusiasm, at the prospect about to open for his prince; the gates of a foreign kingdom would be opened to him by its own citizens; he would speedily unite it with his other crowns, or, if he preferred that course, he might bestow it upon a third party.

The notion of the Spanish protection met amongst the civic members of the League with uncon-

ditional approval, unrestrained by any long investigation. As long as the King-Cardinal Charles X. lived, the ambassador discouraged every manifestation, for during the lifetime of one who had been acknowledged King by himself, Philip II. could not receive them as his vassals. After the death of Charles, during the siege, everything appeared ready for the subjection of France to the King of Spain, and Mendoza only complained that he was not commissioned to carry it into effect\*. The influence of the Duke of Parma did not operate altogether in accordance with the ambassador's views. Mayenne effected arbitrary alterations in the city; still all this did not prevent a formal offer of submission to Philip's authority from reaching Madrid in 1590. The instructions are in existence with which the Sorbonne sent the Franciscan Matteo Aguirre to King Philip, furnished with full power to entreat him to take under his protection the city of Paris, true to God, obedient to the Apostolic See, devoted to the King of Spain, and the Mother of Learning, and to preserve it from the cruel enemies of the Catholic religion. The members describe themselves as the theologians whom God had set over his people. Aguirre asserted that the cities of

\* March 22 : "Esta villa y á su imitacion otras muchas braman por echarse en las manos de V. Md." May 19, he interrupted the negotiations with the Catholics, who only wished "de entregarse á V. Md. sin por no tener orden de V. Md., ní dar me de Flandes claridad del tiempo preciso en que podran venir las fuerças."

Paris, Orléans, Amiens, Beauvais, Peronne, Sens, Soissons, Meaux, and Chartres, had through their delegates requested the doctors to consider the means of saving them, and certainly it would be difficult to express themselves more submissively than he does in their names. "They have commissioned me," he says, "to cast myself at your Majesty's feet, and to implore you to take pity upon them, to forget the many injuries their forefathers have done to the Catholic crown, to turn upon them an eye of favour, to accept them as your vassals, to come to their aid, and henceforth to govern them\*."

The distress and danger of the city, which continued after the siege had been raised, contributed not a little to this step. As Henry continued to repeat from time to time his attempts on Paris the prevailing faction of the Sixteen determined, in February, 1591, not altogether with the good-will of Mayenne, that a garrison of Spaniards and Neapolitans should be received within the walls; their safety from the enemy, and at the same time the defence of the city, appeared to depend upon Spanish assistance alone. Affairs proceeded in a similar manner in the provinces; in the majority of places the League was able to maintain itself only by the assistance of Spanish and Italian forces.

Charles Emmanuel of Savoy had, before the ca-

\* "Reciba de baxo de su proteccion á la ciudad de Paris, ponga los ojos de la clemencia en ellos, y los reciba por sus vasallos."

tastrophe at Blois, promised to come to the assistance of the League, as soon as Henry III. should unite himself with the King of Navarre. It was only the successful progress of the Royal arms in the spring of 1589, and the dread of a day of vengeance, that held him back at that time. After the murder of Henry III. he gave free course to his ambition. He even fancied that as grandson of Henry II. he might lay claim to the crown itself. He caused homage to be rendered to him in Saluzzo, and the lilies everywhere vanished before the white crosses. Meanwhile the Estates of Provence, closely pressed by the adherents of Henry IV. and only sustained by the assistance of the Duke, formally elected him as their Count and Sovereign. On this occasion they never thought of their ancient connection with the German empire—of their relations with the house of Lorraine, from whom the province had been wrested with violence, for the purpose of uniting it in a tyrannical manner with the crown of France. They now, as they declared, knew no one who could protect them from the heretics and their patrons, except the Christian and Catholic, the victorious and good Duke of Savoy: they entreated him to accept them as his vassals, to protect their freedom, and to maintain the Catholic faith\*. In the middle of November, 1590, Charles

\* The speech from which these words are taken is given from the Mémoires of Von Mauray, secretary of La Valette, by

Emmanuel made his solemn entrance into Aix as Count of Provence and Forcalquier. Although he declined all marks of honour reserved for the King alone, in other respects he acted as sovereign of the country ; he formed a council, appointed officers, and summoned the Estates. The royalist governor of the province, La Valette, was not however thereby deposed ; although it was impossible for his master to come to his aid, yet Montmorency from Languedoc, and especially Lesdiguières from Dauphiné, rendered him assistance. In order to overpower him, the Duke betook himself to Marseilles, where he was joyfully received, and set sail for Spain, whence he returned in July, 1591, with fifteen galleys freighted with Spanish auxiliary troops. He reduced the strong place of Berre, and made himself, if not master of the province, yet, with his adherents there, very powerful.

Languedoc presented a complete example of the manner in which the provinces were broken up into parties, and how they waged war with one another.

The Leaguers, under the Duke of Joyeuse, held some of the principal towns, such as Toulouse and Narbonne ; a portion of the provincial nobility was

Dupleix, Henry IV., 61.—He asserts that Charles Emmanuel made this appointment the sole condition of his further assistance, a circumstance which Guichenon, who otherwise follows him (726), did not deem it advisable to repeat. Papon, ‘*Histoire de Provence*,’ is not so well informed as might have been expected. He makes too much literary pretension for a provincial history.

on their side. On the other hand, Montpellier, Béziers, all the Protestant towns and districts, with the most renowned names amongst the ancient nobility, attached themselves to Montmorency, who was so closely connected with Henry IV. Each party held assembly of their estates twice a year, which exercised authority in their districts over the ecclesiastical and secular revenues and the domain of the King. They also granted some supplies, so that the governors were able to maintain troops, both horse and foot, and even some ships upon the coast. Montmorency was the more powerful of the two, for he obtained a large amount of money from the salt-works in his district; he maintained four thousand cavalry, about four thousand infantry, and four vessels of war, which cruised in the neighbouring waters; he also possessed the greatest number of havens. His aggressions provoked Philip II., and in the summer of 1590 he sent a body of German mercenaries, under Count Jerome Lodron, to Narbonne, to assist the Catholics\*. Amongst these troops were a number of

\* In the Archives of Simancas (at Paris) these reports may be found, directed to the King, and composed in the Italian language. The following extract will cast a light upon these transactions:—"Questa mattina," he says, on September 24, 1590, "trattando con il Duca di Joyosa e suo luogotenente generale sopra il particolare di Leucate, gli proposi, in caso che la si pigliasse, se si consentiriano che segli mettesse presidio di Alemanni o che si ispianasse, mi hanno risposto che in questo

German gunners, whom the Archduke Ferdinand had enlisted,—artillerists and founders from Nuremberg and Augsburg, and all descriptions of High-German artisans. In order to teach the French how to deal with heretics, a regiment of Spaniards were also sent by way of Roussillon. With these auxiliaries Joyeuse obtained the superiority, and took a good number of royalist castles. Carcassonne also, on account of which so many battles had been fought, fell into his hands.

In a similar manner the Duke of Mercœur and the Prince of Dombes contended for the mastery in Brittany. Here also there were two assemblies opposed to each other, that of the Leaguers at Nantes and that of the Royalists at Rennes; nor was the interference of the King of Spain wanting: he sent a corps of five thousand men, under Juan de Aguilà, to the assistance of the League. It is very remarkable that the Duke of Mercœur, who considered that he had hereditary claims upon Brittany in right of his consort, should have attached himself to the King of Spain, although he knew that Philip, after long consultation with doctors of both the civil and canon law, had resolved to claim this duchy also for his daughter. The contradiction is however not so glaring as it appears to be. The

caso farebbono quello che S. M. commandasse." He sent at the same time a plan of "Leucate, essendo frontiera buona per la Spagna."

Duke declared that he only wished to see the claims of the Spanish Court made out clearly, when he would acknowledge them, and serve the King with perfect fidelity; but, on the other hand, should Philip be triumphant in the great contest, he would be just and fair enough to take the claims of the Duchess into consideration, and would no doubt leave him the government of the province, with full authority. To these proposals the Spanish Court was very ready to agree, for it was desirable to establish the Infanta's right of succession, even if the other objects contemplated should not be accomplished, for in that case Mercoeur, as deputy of Philip II., would be able to preserve the independence of the duchy under Spanish protection\*. Under these conditions the Duke opened the port of Blavet to the Spanish auxiliaries. The fort of Port Louis arose afterwards from the fortifications which they erected there†. The Duke then obtained the superiority over his antagonist in the province, and his assembly of Estates was much better attended. Notwithstanding some assistance

\* "Copia del papel, que dio en Frances Fray Marcellin, Cornet de la orden de San Domingo, embiado por el Duque de Mercurio," as well as a ministerial resolution, expressly approved of by Philip II., in which it is stated that if Béarn should obtain the crown, "Mercurio no se podria conservar y mantener, si no teniendo el governo en nombre de cuyo es de derecho el ducado, y debaxo del amparo y fuerzas de S. M."

† Daru, 'Histoire de Bretagne,' tom. iii. p. 310.

from England, the Royalists lost one place and one leader after another. Amongst others who fell was De la Noue, a Breton by descent, and the man in whom Henry IV. placed his greatest confidence. He was slain at the storming of the Castle of Lamballé; on the day on which it took place, he adorned his helmet with a branch of laurel, remarking that that was the only reward to be expected from this contest.

In Normandy treaties were entered into here and there between the Leaguers and the adherents of Henry IV., so that each party might cultivate their lands undisturbed. A fresh division arose amongst the Leaguers themselves: Villars, who held possession of Havre-de-Grâce, and Tavannes, who was master of Rouen, regarded each other with the most deadly hatred; each wished to expel the other from the province, and they vied in calling on the Spaniards for aid\*.

As the League was originally a union of the Spaniards with the independence of the powerful governors, so it continued. All these men were greatly disposed to acknowledge King Philip either as Protector or even as King of France, and at all events to recognize his authority over the Crown.

\* Salazar: "Desde luego por su parte nombrará á V. Md. por protector de aquel reyno, ayudará que la villa y lo demás de su gobierno lo sigue, y á su tiempo, quando aya fundamento, tambien entiende de nombrar V. Md. por protector de aquel reyno."

Tavannes said that nothing could be more just, since Philip was descended originally from a French house. Villars promised at least not to oppose it. Merceur and Joyeuse were bound to him by their position. The Duke of Savoy could desire nothing better; the authority of a friendly and nearly related monarch would have powerfully sustained his own.

But the principal question, and that which generally occupied the thoughts of the party, was what should be done with respect to the Crown itself.

The most extraordinary notions were passing through the minds of the members of the Sorbonne. As the calling of an Assembly of the Estates would be accompanied with great difficulties, they held that it was not impracticable that a king should be chosen in the camp by the soldiery, as in the times of the Romans or the Franks. Were it for the advantage of religion, they would not shrink even from the idea of allowing monarchy to fall altogether, and dividing the kingdom into a few great principalities\*.

This last notion was rejected by the entire University, because the partition would be the cause of incessant domestic war. The choice of a monarch they declared to be in their opinion indispensable,

\* "Si cogi non possunt solita comitia, res transigi posset cas trensi electione more Romanorum et priscorum etiam Francorum. Quicquid fiat, omnino procurandum hostis exitium, sive de mon archia conservandâ sive de dividendâ agatur."—'Discursus Fa cultatis Theologicæ,' in the Papers of Simancas.

for the nobility would only reunite around a king. The right of election they adjudged to the Estates, even if these could not be brought together out of all the provinces\*. Were Philip II. a younger man, they continued, the crown should be offered to himself, or, if he had two sons, to one of them; but as the case now stood, the proper course was to raise to the throne some prince who would be agreeable to the King of Spain, and to whom he might give his daughter in marriage.

The council of the sixteen united quarters of Paris expressed opinions almost identical with those of the University. They declared to King Philip that the Catholics had but one wish, and that was to see him rule over them; but if this could not be, he might at least send them his daughter Isabella, and select a consort for her. They were persuaded that she would prove as fortunate a queen for France as Blanche of Castille, the mother of St. Louis, in former days†. Amongst the subscriptions to this resolution the name of Boucher stands prominent, and attracts attention by the large characters in which it is written. Nor does it appear that opinion was different in the other towns. The Provincial of the Jesuits, and the Guardian of the

\* *Discursus Universitatis*: “Neque obstare debet difficultas convocandi Status, cum ii sufficient qui ex unitis populis facilè possunt convocari, nec forsan expediret ut ex universo regno convenirent.”

† Compare Cayet, *Anc. Coll.* lvii. 239.

Franciscans of Orléans, travelled to Spain and assured King Philip of the adhesion of all the towns.

If it be asked how it was possible that opinions of this kind could have met with approval, the fact may become in some measure comprehensible when we consider that the ancient principle of government by estates now co-operated with the religious notions of the time. They had no wish to subject themselves to the absolute authority of the King of Spain, but rather under his protection to carry into practice their own ideas of reform, and of a system of estates. Even in the agreement with Mayenne mention was made of that reform in the judicial and finance administrations which had been previously demanded a thousand times. There were other proposals which contemplated the firm establishment of the freedom of the Estates upon a secure basis for the future. According to these the States General should be assembled at regular intervals, and should not only exercise the power of legislation in its widest extent, but also regulate the finances. The King was to have no power to raise troops without their consent, nor was he to appear in their assemblies until their resolutions had been completed; and these resolutions he was not only to confirm, but to swear to clause by clause. The exclusive Catholic ideas formed an essential principle of this constitution. All alliances with un-Catholic powers were prohibited to the King under pain of losing his crown,

and especially any connection with the Ottomans. Upon the requisition of the Estates, he was to place himself at the head of a crusade against either the former or the latter. The nobility were to render their services on such an occasion at their own charge, and on this condition only should they retain their privileges. It appeared as if the ecclesiastical idea were the only foundation for all political regulations.

The sketch of a constitution laid before the King of Spain in the year 1591, and which was recommended for his adoption in the event of his accepting the Crown himself, is worthy of notice. Its articles were to be confirmed in authentic charters immediately upon his accession. Here also the religious tendencies predominate over all others\*. The first thing demanded was the introduction of the holy office of the Inquisition, which would be so formidable to the wicked in France. The King was to bind himself not to appoint foreigners either to bishoprics, archbishoprics, or to any civil or military offices. No offices were to be sold. All imposts which had been laid on since the reign of Louis XII., with the augmentations of the *taille*, were to be abolished. The administration of the finances was to be so regulated that the income

\* "Articles de chose qu'il fauldrat que le Roi Catholique accordast, permist, et en passast, chartres authentiques, aux Etats du royaume de France, acceptant la couronne de France."—Papers of Simancas.

should be applied to the most urgent cases only, especially to the payment of the military force. Church ideas are associated in the most intimate manner with the views of reform. It was made imperative upon the King to redeem the domains of the Crown, and to liquidate the national debts which were acknowledged by the Estates. If it were asked from what resources the means were to be obtained for effecting all this, the reply was, the estates of the heretics, which the national creditors must accept in satisfaction of their demands, for strict Catholics only were recognized as members of the State. With respect to these, expression was given to an idea of political mildness which has been realized only in modern times. According to this, confiscation of every kind was to cease for the future. The punishment of crime was to affect those only who had committed it\*. It was also contemplated to confine the authority of the King and of his government within narrow limits. One of the articles sets forth that "the Estates shall be assembled every fourth year, in order to examine and regulate all the affairs of the kingdom, and to inquire whether the King has fulfilled or violated his promises†. In the latter case he must make good his failures; or,

\* "Cessera toute confiscation, et sera la punition des délits sur les personnes et payement sur leurs biens meubles et immeubles."

† "Les Estats se tiendront de quatre ans à quatre ans, où on avisera à réformer et régler toutes choses appartenantes à l'estat, de voir si S. M. aura contrevenu à aucune chose."

if he be unwilling to do so, the nation shall be absolved from its oath of allegiance to him, and shall be justified in proceeding to a new election." Nor were the French Catholics willing to transfer their crown to the King of Spain without concessions on his part. He was in return to open to the French the navigation to the East Indies, as well as to America. In Havre, St. Malo, Nantes, and Bordeaux, regulations were to be established similar to those which existed at Seville and Lisbon, for commerce with the colonies. He was also to unite with the French crown all the territories in his possession which had at any time belonged to Gaul, and as sovereign of them assume a new title, somewhat resembling perhaps that of the great king. The scheme concluded with an exposition of the advantages of these regulations. For the future, no one would be excluded from ecclesiastical offices; for when elected in a regular manner, the spiritual person would have the assistance of the Holy Ghost\*. The nobility would again have access to all places and offices. The third estate would no longer be oppressed with imposts, nor divided from the other estates. In this manner it would be possible at the same time to re-establish the general

\* "Le clergé appelé à sa fonction canoniquement seroit assisté du Saint Esprit; ce premier état n'exclueroit aucun, fût-il noble ou rôturier, et seroit un lien pour joindre ensemble les deux autres Etats;" as Canossa formerly pointed out.

peace of Christendom, to overthrow the Turks, and once more to conquer the Holy Land. The limitation of the throne, the establishment of the Estates in their original equilibrium of power, the definitive triumph of the Catholic Church upon earth, were all united in one liberal Catholic system. It is easy to conceive that this scheme was viewed with enthusiasm.

The ancient ideas of municipal freedom were meanwhile extending themselves. The towns, as we have mentioned, would not receive any royal garrisons nor governors within their walls. They raised the public taxes and applied them, and set up popular tribunals for themselves. Many even of the distinguished clergy were expelled for not concurring with the Commons in everything. Such of the nobility only as held the principles of the League were tolerated, but even they dared not to resist the commonalty. The object of the towns was to secure for themselves a condition resembling that of the free imperial cities of Germany; and this they hoped to attain under the great Catholic king, and at the same time to obtain other objects which it was not right and fit they should wait for any longer\*. In the memorial of Salazar, who as-

\* Vendramin, Relatione di Savoia: "Essendosi vedute in un tratto tante sollevationi e tanti gridi de' popoli e di quelle principali provincie con un solo fine, è risoluto di voler cambiar forma al suo governo e di voler separarsi dell' obedientia del suo principe, per governarsi a repubbliche popolari, imitando le terre franche di Germania."

serted that he had been commissioned by the Sorbonne, and indirectly by the towns, we have an insight as to the extent of their views, which is really astounding. He counsels the King to garrison those fortresses which could impede the communication between Flanders and Picardy, and then to march into France at the head of a great army and take the title of Protector. He might then disperse Mayenne's council, reform the Parliaments and the tribunals, and appoint new presidents as well as new bishops, who would submit to the decrees of the Council of Trent, in order to improve the clergy. This was not all. He was to raze all the castles in the country, so that the nobility should no longer have any lurking-places, and that the towns might remain masters of the field, with power and justice. He was to take care that only such preachers as agreed with his views, and whose services were to be remunerated, should be allowed to officiate in the towns ; to free the towns from everything that impeded their trade, whether at their gates or at the passages of the rivers ; to allow no fortresses except such as commanded these passages, a few perhaps excepted, in which there were to be placed devoted governors\*. When he had thus taught all the provinces to appreciate the advantages of the union with Spain, and had, if pos-

\* "Personas de valor y religion, y que entienden y desteen su servicio."

sible, found devoted persons in each district, then, but not before, he might summon the Estates to complete the whole. It looked almost as if it were contemplated to renew the ancient war of the towns against the nobility, and to carry it on with the aid of the Burgundo-Spanish power.

These were the views by which men's minds were occupied, for every one readily associated his own wishes with a general prospect. It only remained to ascertain the light in which Philip II. would view the matter.

This prince had interfered in the affairs of France, originally, on two grounds: the one to prevent the French from lending assistance to the Netherlands; the other lest he should be disturbed by the French in carrying out his plan for securing to himself a universal supremacy. Events had however led him further; and now he could even contemplate uniting, in some manner, the French crown with that of Spain, and becoming sovereign and master of the Catholic world. The prospect upon which he gazed was immeasurable.

When we peruse the original papers, we are struck with the fact that Philip II. was not himself the first promoter of these world-wide plans and enterprises. The leading thoughts were those of his statesmen, envoys, governors, and plenipotentiaries, rather than his own. For every power is moved by the impulse of those ideas on which it is founded,

and in the progress of which the zeal of their adherents sees the promotion of their fortune. Philip yielded to these views rather than originated them. He displayed his peculiar satisfaction when the Catholic religion was benefited by them. For the rest, he allowed things to take their course, and for a long period to pass along, not deeming it necessary to express an opinion either in general or as regarded particulars.

Now however it could continue so no longer. In France, matters had reached that point that he could no longer defer coming to a positive resolution concerning his relations with that kingdom, and the policy it was necessary for him to adopt.

He had been frequently spoken to concerning the rights of his daughter Isabella, the granddaughter of Henry II. and Catharine. These rights were of a twofold nature. Bernardino Mendoza always specially insisted upon the claims which the Infanta might make as heiress of her grandfather to the Duchy of Brittany, which had descended to her from her mother; and also as heiress of her grandmother, to the possessions which were hers in her own right, and which were by no means inconsiderable. The French, on the other hand, both the great nobles and the towns, put forward, in preference, her right to the crown itself. The question was in effect whether the monarchy should be diminished or perhaps disintegrated, or whether it should be preserved in its

entirety. The Spaniards were in favour of the former alternative, especially at the commencement of the League; the latter appeared to the French who were of the Spanish party to be preferable. They maintained that the Salic law was not unalterable by right; that the throne belonged to the eldest female descendant of the house of Valois, and on that account she would be acknowledged without difficulty, for she was, as every one knew, of a disposition akin to that of the French, and, above all, she was yet unmarried: all the princes of Christendom would be rivals for her hand, and an alliance might be concluded through which the military force could be doubled. Bernardino's intentions had always been to enforce, at the same time with the provincial claims of the Infanta, the right of the Protectorate for the advantage of the King and of the Crown; France would then be still more disunited, and reduced to a dependency of the Spanish monarchy. Whilst the French desired to unite the supreme power with the claims of the Infanta, they exhibited also a profound and unshaken attachment to the dynastic principle, but they postponed it in favour of what they deemed the future prosperity of France.

After long hesitation, Philip at last resolved to concur with the scheme proposed for his adoption on the part of the French. He made to his adherents in France the double proposition that they should immediately acknowledge his daughter Isa-

bella as Queen of France, and, further, that they should leave it to himself to select a husband for her, who should be acknowledged as King of France\*.

He did not consider the special advantage of Spain as a state, but he took the entire disposition of the crown of France into his own hands. His designs were not directed so much to the dominion of Spain over other countries, as to the universal sovereignty of his house by means of the power of Spain.

He had reflected upon the choice of a husband for his daughter,—a prince whom he should at the same time give to the French as their king,—but he had not come to an irrevocable determination. He mentioned several names to his plenipotentiaries, but always with an intimation that they were not to insist upon any of them in opposition to the French; for he did not deceive himself in supposing that, with all the inclination of the French nobles, it would not yet require a very difficult and critical negotiation to bring them to a definitive agreement.

In addition to all this Henry IV. was by no means yet set aside; the issue of the negotiations was still dependent upon the future results of a trial of arms.

\* As it is stated in a note of Tassis: 1, "que declaran por reyna á la Sra Infanta;" 2, "que remitan la election de rey a S. Md., pues se trata de que le tome por hyerno."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

CAMPAIGN OF 1591 AND 1592.—ASSEMBLY OF THE  
ESTATES OF 1593.

WHEN men like Mendoza regarded the operation of the Spanish influence upon France as part only of a plan for the universal re-establishment of Catholicism in Western Europe, it is easy to conceive that the prince whom they sought to expel from France would be likely to find assistance amongst those who would be immediately endangered by his fall. Queen Elizabeth of England at once formed an intimate alliance with Henry IV. The relations which existed between them sometimes took the form of personal courtesy. The Queen had the King's portrait placed in her cabinet; she spoke of him in remarkably warm terms, and sent him a scarf wrought by a skilful hand. The King said he was determined to wear it in battle for her honour; that all he was and all he had belonged to her; and that, sailing under the

auspices of her favour, he hoped yet to reach the port\*. They did not however exchange mere empty words. The Queen supported the King in reality to the extent of her power. She sent him troops armed and paid by herself, powder and ball, and, what was more necessary than anything else, money; sometimes she even anticipated Henry's requests for aid, and it may well be doubted whether, without her assistance, he would have been able to maintain his position in the north of France.

The interests involved in the approaching struggle were not quite so decisive as regarded the German Protestants. The Lutherans, who were aristocratic, with Estates, and hostile to Calvinism, had made their peace with the Empire, which had either inclined to milder views, or was fettered by its own weakness; they now expected to enjoy perpetual security under the forms of the Empire. There were individuals however who saw in the rise of the Romish-Spanish tendencies a common danger, and who felt that although the Reformed might be the first whom they would affect, yet when the one had fallen they might reach the others. Even in Germany we now hear of the designation of Politicians. It indicated men who were not unconditionally bound by the definitive dogmata of the Church, but

\* Despatch of La Nocle, January 20, 1590: "Avec telle démonstration qu'il nous euida sembler qu'elle en aimeroit mieux le vif."—In the Egerton Collection, 305.

who comprehended in their view the general relations of Europe, and regarded the preservation of the independence of the French Crown as a necessary condition of the religious and political freedom of the German States and Orders, as well as of the rest of Europe.

The Chancellor of Saxony, Nicholas Krell, was a man of this disposition, who afterwards had to expiate with his life his departure from the ordinary paths—a meteoric phenomenon in Albertinian Saxony. We need not examine how far the Calvinistic inclinations of him or his master, the Elector Christian, extended, and have only to observe, that under their influence Dresden became the centre of French negotiations, which extended over the whole of Northern Germany, and were by no means, in general, dependent upon the doctrinal opinions of the parties in treaty. At a congress in Cassel a design was formed in accordance with which even the strictly Lutheran powers, such as Wirtemberg, Hesse, Holstein-Denmark, and the Dukes of Saxony, bound themselves to contribute to the assistance of the Bourbon King. Krell expressed his astonishment at the conduct of the warlike knights, who could still hesitate to take arms; “were he free,” he said, “he would take the field had he but twenty horse, for the salvation of Henry IV. was the salvation of both the State and the Church\*.”

\* Compare “Aus dem wider den Verhaftten Dr. Nicolaus

In August, 1591, a splendid army, composed of High-German *Landsknechte* and North-German cavalry, under the command of old and approved officers, commenced its march through Lorraine in the direction of France. Fabian Dohna was there also, and it fell to his lot to lead the van and prepare the way for the others. The chief command was on this occasion however entrusted to a German Prince of the Empire, Christian of Anhalt, whom the other princes and nobles obeyed, without difficulty.

Queen Elizabeth had this time also sent a portion of the necessary funds, and the troops were mustered in the presence of her ambassador.

It is remarkable that the declaration made by Henry IV. on his accession, as to the possibility of a change in his religious views, had no effect whatever. The Protestant sympathies for him were in no degree diminished by it; the present expedition bore precisely the character of those by which it had been preceded.

Henry IV. had just reduced Noyon, when there came to his assistance, on the one side, the Earl of Essex, with four thousand English troops, whose pompous entry into Compiègne attracted much at-

Crell verführten Inquisitionsprocess, verfasste Deducirung bei Kessling: "Continuation of the 'Historia Motuum.' The report, according to an Italian MS., was that these troops were "pagati per la maggior parte dal Duca di Sassonia."

tention, and, on the other, the German army. Michaelmas day, in the year 1591, was solemnized by a great review on the plains of Vaudy, on the Aisne. The Germans posted themselves in eight divisions, four of cavalry, and four of infantry, which formed a semicircle; their cavalry might have amounted to six thousand, and their infantry to about ten thousand men. They attracted the special admiration of the French by the skill which they displayed in firing the great and small guns which they brought with them\*. The King went from company to company and from troop to troop, in order to see and be seen. He found a great number of old acquaintances amongst the officers, and welcomed them cordially. He also expressed his gratitude to the German Princes for such splendid aid.

And indeed he had good reason to do so, for just at this time was formed in his vicinity a union of forces against him, which might otherwise have been highly dangerous to him.

The Chair at Rome was at that time occupied by a man who, without any of those views which occasionally influenced the earlier Popes, united himself unconditionally with the system of the Spaniards and the League. This was Gregory XIV., who was a member of a distinguished Milanese family. It appeared to him to be the greatest misfortune that

\* Report of Cayet, worthy of notice for military history; 'Chronologie Novennaire,' Michaud, xii. 308.

could befall the Church, should Vendôme, as he called Henry IV., come to the actual possession of the throne, since in that case France would fall into the hands of the heretics. He summoned the King of Spain to apply the wealth brought to him by the last Plate fleet to that purpose for which God had undoubtedly bestowed those riches, namely, to the defence of Christendom from so great a mischief. He himself did not hesitate in making use, for this object, of the treasure laid up in the Castle of St. Angelo by Sixtus V., for never, said he, could a more urgent necessity come on the Church. He was of opinion that the Pope and the King would be strong enough to terminate the affair by themselves, and that as yet it was not necessary to seek for assistance from the other Italian princes; should that be wanted however he pledged his word that they would not fail to render it, when it was demanded. He had never expected much from previous enterprises of the kind, but he was convinced that this would be successful\*.

In the beginning of March the Pope had already made known his intentions to the French. He threatened the clergy in sundry monitories with excommunication, and the nobility and third Estate with his displeasure, if they did not instantly separate themselves from Henry IV., whom he once

\* "De quoi il assure et en répond."—Extract from a Letter in the Egerton Collection, 323.

more pronounced to be a relapsed heretic, deposed by law from all his royalties and dominions. In short, Gregory renewed, in the interests of the Spaniards and of the League, the ancient pontifical pretensions to absolute and supreme authority.

A Papal army made its appearance in France in the summer of 1591. It was composed of Italians and Swiss, and commanded by a nephew of the Pontiff's. It joined at Verdun the forces of the Duke of Lorraine, who was now entirely on the side of his French relatives and the League. After a junction had been formed with Alexander of Parma, the intention was to make a new and more effective attempt for the establishment of a Catholic king in France, to which end the Pope had expressly enlisted his Switzers\*.

Here again we meet with the complete antagonism between the rigid Church idea in the spirit of the Middle Ages, and the Catholic as well as the Protestant deviation from them. Gregory XIV., like Philip II., was resolved with all his power to re-establish the old system in France. Henry IV., besides his Protestant confederates, had also in his favour the Catholic party, which had always resisted these arbitrary demands, and which now, instead of being terrified, was roused to indignation by their revival.

\* Sillery : "Le prétexte de la demande estoit pour servir à l'selection et établissement d'un roi Catholique."

It was not, properly speaking, as yet a contest between the King and the Pope. Possessed of the superiority, by means of his German auxiliaries, Henry IV. wished to bring the Pope's nephew immediately to battle, and with this view advanced to within half a league of his head-quarters; but the only result was a slight skirmish which took place on the heights near the camp, and which was beheld by the Germans present with an almost uncontrollable desire to join the combatants. The Papal army had a different destiny.

It must be regarded as an event of great importance that Gregory XIV., who held the principle of Catholic restoration in its entire strictness and unaffected by any political considerations, died at this particular conjuncture, in which that very enterprise was about to commence, which he regarded as the salvation of the world. His death rendered the mission of both the army and its leader doubtful. The remittances from Rome ceased; and after a few months all that remained together of the Papal force were some hundreds of Italian cavalry and fifteen hundred Swiss, which were incorporated with the army of the Duke of Parma; for it was between the French King and the Spanish general that the affair was to be decided\*.

Through the marriage of the heiress of Sedan to

\* Henry to Nevers, December 13, 1591: *Lettres Missives*, iii. 547.

Turenne, who had led the Germans to Henry IV., he succeeded in gaining possession of that important position on the Meuse, and soon after, with the assistance of the German troops, in conquering St. Valéry, at the mouth of the Somme. He now undertook the siege of Rouen, the possession of which would have involved that of all Normandy, and given him the complete mastery over the whole of northern France : by December, 1591, the siege was considerably advanced, and the King hoped in a short time to be master of the strongest of the forts—that of St. Catharine—he expected that Villars, who took counsel chiefly with women and a priest, would then make proposals of surrender.

At this moment however Alexander of Parma made his appearance once more in France, at the head of an army, which, though not numerous, was distinguished for its experience, and which, even without any special assistance from Rome, gave great strength to the efforts of the League, and to the principles of his King. The emulation between the French and Spanish systems of warfare was here renewed once more, but the latter still preserved its superiority.

Henry resolved on this occasion both to continue his siege and to meet the enemy.

He came in view of the Spaniards at Aumale, and the opposite qualities of the two generals were clearly shown in their conduct on the occasion.

Henry was bolder, Farnese more circumspect than ever. The former was wounded, and very nearly taken prisoner, in an assault made with little deliberation. The latter neglected out of circumspection to follow up his advantage ; it was enough for him to have thrown relief into Rouen.

The armies were as distinct in their qualities as the generals.

When Henry, in the progress of the siege, in which he was assisted by English pioneers amongst others, had brought the town once more to a state of the greatest distress, Alexander Farnese resolved to advance from the Somme, where he had taken up a position, a second time towards Rouen. He was now more successful : the King was obliged to raise the siege in reality. Farnese appeared to the multitude to be the greatest man in the world ; as he had once relieved Paris, so now did he Rouen, and was received there with the most tumultuous joy.

If the reasons of his success be investigated, they will be found to consist chiefly in the fact that he had thoroughly calculated all circumstances, and did not put his troops in motion until, according to the custom of the time, Henry had dismissed the greater part of his nobility. These however now assembled round him again without delay ; within five days fifteen hundred gentlemen from Normandy alone entered his camp fully armed\*, and all the

\* I take this notice from an ephemeral brochure, ' Utile et

other provinces emulated this. The infantry could also be strengthened from the neighbouring garrisons, and in a short time Henry found himself strong enough to take the field, and to march in search of the enemy.

Farnese had allowed himself, at the very moment of victory, to be led aside from his system, and, against his own better judgement, yielded to the urgent request of his French friends, and marched upon Caudebec, for the purpose of opening the Seine by the capture of that town ; he was wounded whilst conducting a reconnaissance, yet with his bleeding arm he traced the orders which led to the taking of the place. This did not however prevent the danger which he incurred by the approach of the royal army—which was much superior to his own, and was supported by several Dutch transports from the Lower Seine—from being most imminent ; and the conqueror suddenly found himself besieged in his camp, whilst provisions were already beginning to run short.

The French expected that the proud Duke would endeavour to force his way by an open attack ; but he was not in a position, at such a distance from the Spanish provinces, and without any certain support to fall back upon, to run the risk of a pitched battle.

*Salutaire Advis au Roi pour bien régner*, addressed to Louis XIII. about the year 1617 ; it is the work of a very well-informed person.

We should read in the Italian historians, who admire in Farnese the reviver of the ancient Italian military renown,—the accounts of his passage of the Seine\*, for this was the course upon which he determined as the only one which could save him. It has been regarded even in later times as one of the ablest military movements of the century. In the face of two superior and watchful enemies, he crossed the river with his army, and then, by rapid forced marches, unretarded and uninjured, passed through the Isle of France and Artois, and reached the Spanish provinces in safety.

Thus did these generals carry on the contest : the one at the head of a body of feudal troops and auxiliaries, who were perpetually divided from each other by a certain nationality, and whom he yet succeeded in keeping together by his own energy ; the other, the leader of a completely organized force, which enabled him to give free development to his strategic principles.

Henry was indebted to the support of the Protestant powers, and to the devotedness of the French nobility, which, though often interrupted, always revived again with fresh fervour, for his not being

\* From a letter of Don Martin da Guzpile to Philip II., May 25, 1592, it appears that Farnese was not universally admired by his contemporaries. They assert that the enemy "nos hizo algunas entradas y nosotros ninguna, aunque la gente de V. Md. estava con grandissimas ganas ;" and that all had fallen again into the old condition.

defeated by the hostile force ; still however he had not been able to make himself master of Normandy. Though not conquered strategically, he was outgeneraled ; and his attempts to break up the League had not been successful.

The League, on the contrary, renewed, even under altered circumstances, the attempt to set him aside, and to settle the kingdom according to their own views.

Mayenne, who still occupied the most important position amongst the great nobles of the League, had never yet been able to come to a full understanding with Mendoza ; and it appears, from the correspondence of the latter, that they disliked each other personally. Mendoza is unjust towards the Duke when he charges him with never knowing his own mind, and listening to others with but half an ear, and with a species of distraction. Mendoza had rested his success entirely on the support of the multitude. Mayenne made no claims on popularity ; in this he differed totally from his brother ; he could not bring himself to seek the favour of the people, and, had he done so, could not have obtained it. He did not possess any of those remarkable qualities which sway mankind, nor that energy by which they are carried away. His enterprises were neither bold, rapid, nor even fortunate ; he was a man of a full habit of body, to whom repose and enjoyment seemed necessary ; in his domestic affairs

he was economical, generally reserved ; by no means liberal ; circumspect, calculating, and yet not without the loftiest and most ambitious notions. The wild impulses of the popular leaders had long been distasteful to him ; yet he bore with them, until at length one of their most monstrous excesses occasioned a general cry of indignation. The learned and estimable Brisson had allowed a person suspected by them to go at liberty ; for this they could not forgive him, and, without even hearing him in his own defence, or making use of the form of law, they condemned and executed him. The party called Politicians—that is, the most moderate of the inhabitants—began to fear that the ruling faction would endeavour to get rid of them by some great act of violence. A red paper was circulated from hand to hand, containing the names of all those who were destined to death or banishment\*. Mayenne seized this moment to come from the camp to the city, for the purpose of teaching the Sixteen the limits of their authority. He caused the principal authors of Brisson's execution to be arrested and punished with death, and, at the same time, took possession of the Bastille. The Spaniards were not at all satisfied with these proceedings ; but the military spirit of the garrison

\* L'Etoile, November 25, 1591, in Champollion, 69 : "En leurs rôles ils les distinguaient par ces trois lettres, P. D. C., qui étoit à dire, Pendu, Dagué, Chassé."

prevented them from making any opposition, and Mayenne contrived to prevent a rising of the populace. He paid a visit to the Sorbonne, in order to mollify its members, and allowed the preachers to proceed in the usual style of declamation ; he was satisfied with having shown them that there was a law superior to them, and a power to administer that law.

Whilst he kept aloof from Mendoza and the popular movements however, he entered into earnest consultation concerning the definitive settlement of France, with Alexander of Parma, who, as a soldier by profession, had no great liking for them either. A conference upon this subject had been held at the commencement of the last campaign ; the parties to it were, on the side of Parma, his chief councillor Richardot, and the Spanish ambassador, Don Diego Ibarra ; and, on the part of Mayenne, a statesman named Jeannin. The Spanish statesmen were in favour of proceeding in a legal manner, and demanded an assembly of the Estates, that they might proceed to the election of a king. Jeannin remarked, on the other hand, that such a step could only be of service to give the stamp of legality to what the great nobles might agree upon ; that the King of Spain must first of all have a full understanding with them, and especially with the house of Guise ; that the affair was surrounded with difficulties, and the only means by which they could be

overcome was money. The offers made by Don Diego were very considerable, but they were not deemed sufficient.

Whatever difference of opinion might have prevailed however, Mayenne, in accordance with the desire of Farnese, at last concluded upon calling together, in the beginning of the year 1593, the Estates, which had been so often promised, a few of the deputies having been elected in different places. Some of the instructions given to the delegates are still extant,—those, for example, of the clergy at Auxerre, and of the third Estate at Troyes. The former establish it as an essential principle that there should never be tolerated more than one religion in France, since there was but one baptism and one God; an inviolable fundamental law must exclude from the French throne any prince who may be a heretic or a favourer of heretics; the new King must, if possible, be descended from the ancient royal blood, but his elevation must depend upon election, and upon the approval of the Pope as well as of the King of Spain, who is to give him his daughter in marriage\*. At Troyes Henry of Bourbon was excluded by name, even should he profess to have turned to the Catholic religion, for he was a relapsed heretic, excommunicated by the

\* "Articles des Remonstrances du Clergé d'Auxerre pour les Etats," in Bernard, 'Procès Verbaux des Etats Gén. de 1593,' p. 785.

Pope, declared unworthy of all royal prerogatives, and rejected by previous assemblies of the Estates\*. The only condition here made regarding the new king was that he should be a Frenchman ; that he should carry on the government through a council selected from the great nobles of the kingdom and the deputies of the provincial Estates, and that all which had been resolved upon by the Estates of Blois should have the force of law for the future†. In fact it could hardly be otherwise than that the Catholic views, and those of the Estates, which had operated so powerfully throughout the whole movement, would preponderate in the new assembly also. The nature of Mayenne's views at this time cannot be ascertained with precision ; at times he even negotiated with Henry IV. ; the Spaniards showed considerable dissatisfaction at his conduct during the elections, for he kept his eye upon his own advantage only, and persecuted those who held opinions favourable to Spain. They thought it necessary that Philip II. should send a new army into France, in order to give courage to his adherents, and especially to the towns, which would then declare themselves openly. The nuncio of the Romish court, if not the court itself, expressed similar

\* Memoirs of Troyes, December 11, 1592. *Ibid.* 780.

† M. de Guzpine, October 20, 1592 : "Si el exercito de V. Md.... (es) en aquel reyno poderoso, le (for Mayenne) será fuerça andar á derechas, pues con esto podran los bien intencionados y muchos pueblos descubrirse."

opinions. He summoned the King of Spain to unite the terrifying power of iron with the attractive power of gold,—to do all his utmost to bring the French over to his views, whether they were willing or unwilling.

Philip II. was now in fact determined to act with all his power. Alexander of Parma, who had resided at Spa during the summer for the purpose of establishing his health, prepared to return to France at the head of a new army in the autumn. Bodies of German *Landsknechte*, under Kurz and Bernstein, the old bands of Italy and Spain, under Capizucchi and Zuniga, with Walloon regiments from the Netherlands, were already assembled on the French frontiers. The remittances from Spain being delayed or having failed, Farnese raised the necessary funds upon his own credit in Antwerp. He even hired a mansion for himself at Paris, and had it prepared for his residence. He wished, as they had requested him, to secure the city from the assaults of the King of Navarre and the contrivances of the Politicians, but at the same time he was desirous of keeping the members of the League to their duty, and of giving confidence to the great Spanish Catholic party in the assembly of the Estates.

It was the last great blow; everything was expected from it. The Duke of Parma, honoured by all for his merit, feared by all for his power, he to

whom the capital and the party generally were indebted for their salvation, would, as he had done the most eminent service in the field, now by an armed diplomacy bring the great cause to a successful issue. If any man were capable of effecting this, it was he.

How vain are human calculations! Divine Providence mocks at them! When Alexander Farnese was on the point of setting out for France he was snatched away by death.

For fourteen days he had been seen almost constantly on horseback at Arras, for the purpose of mustering the troops that were to accompany him into France. On the first of December he was taken ill, but still continued to sign the military orders, though with a trembling hand. His attendants entreated him to conserve the last spark of life by taking some repose. He answered that even if it were the last spark, he would devote it, as he had done his whole life, to the public interests. He expired on the 3rd of December. Alexander of Parma had just made every preparation for the execution of plans which were expected to determine the future destinies of the world; the next moment his dead body was gazed upon as it lay in the church of St. Vedast, enveloped in the dress of a Capuchin friar, and surrounded with three hundred torches. His death was an event of no less importance than that of Gregory XIV.

In the beginning of the year 1593 the deputies to the States General entered Paris by degrees. They were by no means complete, but yet in such numbers as to allow of the opening of their sittings at the Louvre on the 26th of January. They were received, in the spirit which prevailed at their election, with sermons, in which their right to depart from the observance of the Salic law was proved; and with Papal admonitions, in which, on the principle that God raises and deposes kings, and that the voice of the people is the voice of God, they were urged to proceed to the election of a true Catholic king.

The great combination of Philip II. was not however accomplished by these means. The old conqueror and liberator being dead, the Spanish army, which was personally attached to him, did not proceed into France. Instead of Farnese appeared, as if to carry on some ordinary negotiation, Lorenzo Suarez Figueroa, Duke of Feria, whom nobody knew, in company with a Spanish lawyer, Inigo Mendoza, appointed to show the nullity of the Salic law upon juridical grounds.

Mayenne thought it advisable to meet this embassy, with which Tassis also was associated, on its way at Soissons, in order to come to an agreement with it beforehand. The two Spanish statesmen thought it would be a decisive advantage could they succeed in bringing Mayenne into their views,

though the lawyer did not share in that opinion. They considered that should the Duke enter Paris with them in the desired disposition, he would win over all the others to himself and to them\*.

The first topic discussed in the negotiations was the claim of the Spanish Infanta to the French crown. Mayenne had no objection to it: he declared frequently that her right was complete and unquestionable, but he repeated that to enforce that right would be infinitely difficult, and made the most extravagant demands for himself. Many warm words may have been exchanged during the conference, but it resulted in a common understanding. To the Duke were promised the government of Burgundy, with reservation only of the sovereign prerogatives of the King, and the government of Normandy, under the usual conditions attached to such offices. He was further to receive immediately a large present, and considerable rents in perpetuity; his debts were all to be paid; until the arrival of the Infanta he was to be her Lieutenant-General, and to receive on her arrival one of the greatest offices in the kingdom. In return Mayenne pledged himself to make use of all his influence in the assembled Estates, in order that

\* Tassis gave his view very directly: "Viendo quan mezclado anda lo de Dios con lo del mundo, y que es permitido y conveniente ayudarse desto postrero para salir con lo primero, seria bueno, entrar en estados teniendo comprados á los que mas al caso hizien, y en particular al de Umena."

the illustrious Infanta should be declared Queen of France, since he knew very well that that would be the most effectual way to destroy heresy and to maintain religion in the kingdom\*. He promised verbally to give his vote at once for the Infanta. Thus the most important point appeared to have been attained, and the ambassadors were of opinion that they would be able to effect all the rest, either by present liberality or by promises for the future. The French in general were visibly in a state of great misery, and few of them virtuous enough to bear it with firmness; they were determined to better their condition in this world, and neither to perish nor to suffer for their salvation in the world to come. The ambassadors arrived in Paris on the 9th of March, and found the general disposition sufficiently favourable to their purpose. A speech made by Feria to the Estates, in support of the Infanta Isabella's claims, was well received. No one ventured to declare for Henry IV., and although the other Pretenders were spoken of by some, the Infanta held the highest place amongst them all. Mayenne returned to Paris on the 6th of May, and then the official negotiations commenced. A Junta was formed, comprising the great Catholic nobles

\* The originals of this agreement are printed in the *Commentaries of Tassis*, b. viii. p. 524. Concerning the negotiations there is, besides his narrative, the report of Inigo Mendoza, in the papers of Simancas. Inigo adds the verbal promise also.

present, and the delegates of those who were absent, six deputies of the Estates, two from each, and some of the members of Mayenne's council. The Spaniards again minutely expounded to this Junta the claims of the Infanta, expressing themselves intentionally in the most moderate terms, and stating that if it were deemed necessary they had no objection that election should be added to the right of birth. The French hesitated to agree to the pretension of a right. They required above all things that the support they were to receive should be named, in order that they might be able to reckon upon it. Two days afterwards the Spaniards stated what was to be expected from their King, although they had no definite instructions from him on the subject, but were obliged to make use of older papers\*. Everything now wore an appearance as if all parties were about to come to a full and thorough accordance.

Whether it arose from neglect, or a general hesitation to touch the last great difficulty, there had been nothing settled as yet regarding the person who was to be the husband of the Infanta should she become Queen. It may have been owing to the vague manner in which this point was passed over, that the scheme of her succession to the throne did not from the first arouse a greater resistance than that which now appeared. There

\* "Sin precisa y clara luz de V. Md.," as Tassis says.

were in the house of Bourbon, as well as in that of Lorraine, a whole crowd of unmarried princes, who indulged in hopes of the Infanta's hand, or in favour of whom such hopes were cherished by their nearest relatives. The silence upon this subject therefore, however long preserved, must at length be broken.

The ambassadors then announced that it was the wish of Philip II. to marry his daughter to his own cousin, the Archduke Ernest, and place them both upon the throne. The Infanta Isabella had been long before intended for the Emperor Rudolf, but in the strange state of mind into which he had fallen, he could never bring himself either to fetch home his bride or to renounce her. Philip II. then cast his eye upon the Emperor's brother, the Archduke Ernest, to whom he transferred the Government of the Netherlands after the death of the Prince of Parma\*; and Ernest entered into the King's views with joy. King Philip was therefore in a certain degree bound to propose the Archduke to the French. Yet he had often received assurances out of France that the French could only be governed by the authority of a prince descended from the royal blood of France. But beside this lay, in this project, the further development of the idea of a Catholic dynasty, possessing the supremacy over Europe. It was looked upon as a future possibility that the Archduke Ernest might unite

\* Compare Khevenhiller, 'Annales Ferdinandei IV.', 1072.

with the Imperial dignity the possession of the Netherlands and of the French crown.

Would the prudence and authority of the Duke of Parma have been sufficient to have made this proposal agreeable? It may well be doubted. Probably if he had not noticed it at the commencement, as was afterwards asserted, the affair might not have been impossible, but the Archduke should not have been named in the first instance. The moment the proposal was made it awakened a fierce and general opposition.

Philip had foreseen the probability of this result, and named three others, any one of whom would have been acceptable to him;—Charles of Guise, who was son of the Duke of Guise, assassinated at Blois; he had recently escaped from prison, almost as if by miracle, and possessed the confidence of his party universally; or one of the sons of the Duke of Lorraine, under the condition however that Lorraine should not be united to the French Crown; or, finally, the son of the Duke of Mayenne. The name of the Archduke having aroused general opposition, the ambassadors were under the necessity of proposing another, and Feria decided, not altogether with the concurrence of Inigo Mendoza, in favour of the Guise first named above, for whom he felt a personal predilection. He met a friend of the Guise family in a Franciscan convent, and with the most profound secrecy confided to him the

intelligence that Philip II. would be satisfied that the French should elect Guise for their king, and that his daughter would accept him as her husband. This proposal was received with loud and universal joy amongst the members of the League, as the proposal of the Archduke had awakened their dissatisfaction ; and though the communication was made in private, it was rapidly imparted from one to another in confidence, until it was known to all. On the 18th of July, 1592, the preachers announced in the churches that God had at last pointed out the future King, a young prince who had never departed from the faith, of good lineage, a new David.

The only question now was one raised by Inigo Mendoza—whether Mayenne, who guided everything, would be content with this choice.

From the obscurity in which Mayenne hid himself, there flashed from time to time gleams of the loftiest ambition. He had formerly given the Duke of Parma to understand, without circumlocution, that he himself cherished hopes of being King of France, and wrote to him that he would prefer the King of Spain to all others as Sovereign of France, but that, should he not accept the crown, Mayenne considered that he had deserved so well in promoting the Catholic cause, that he expected no one else would be chosen in preference to him. He gave hopes that if the Spaniards would assist him

to the French throne, he would cede Burgundy\*. Philip had been displeased with this, and did not agree to it, but Mayenne could not retract the words he had once uttered. It is possible that the affair might have been accommodated had Inigo Mendoza's advice been followed, and Mayenne's son proposed by the Spaniards. Of the elevation of Guise to the throne he would on the other hand hear nothing : he said he loved his nephew as much as he did himself, but not more ; he wished him as great fortune as his own, but not greater, and superior to himself he did not wish to see him. The Papal nuncio, Sega, remarked to Mayenne, that even the sculptor prostrates himself before the crucifix which he himself had made ; and reminded him of the example of Lycurgus, who, when he had re-established the throne of Sparta, left it to his nephew. But how could it have been expected that representations of this kind would have any influence upon a man who had adopted the Italian notion of the supreme power, and believed that in order to attain it all means were lawful, and that no promise, no oath, had any force to bind a man who was striving for its possession\*? He was said

\* "Petere, ne sibi in conservandâ vetere religione laboribus paternis, fraternis et suis, reliquos omnes antegresso præteri pârum quam meritorum tantorum pretium pateretur; spondere autem, si auxiliis fultus in solium Gallicum scanderet, Burgundia ducatum Philippo regi."—Dondinus, *De Rebus in Galliâ gestis*, 483.

\* "Que en materia de stado no ay que hazer caso de jura-

to have declared that it was impossible to be at the same time a good statesman and a good Christian. It appeared to him a humiliation to accord to the elder branch of his family prerogatives of superiority over his own descendants. He declared to the ambassadors that it was not a king which was now wanted, but troops and money, and that until these were supplied he would hear nothing of an election to the throne. In short, he postponed or evaded every proposition upon the subject.

Montaigne expresses his astonishment, that the Guises should have, one after another, ascended the steps of the throne, and yet not dared to take possession of it. The reason is to be found in the fact that the only conjuncture in which it could be done or was possible, that in which the public voice was in its favour, was marred by the interference of Guise's own uncle. He laid himself down "before the garden of the Hesperides, in order to prevent his nephew from gathering the golden fruit." The last combination which would at least have made possible the attempt to establish an exclusive Catholic monarchy, founded on Estates, did not take place.

Mayenne, had he now undertaken the establishment of the legitimate monarchy, might have preceded Monk in the renown which he acquired at

mentos; recordandose lo que avia prometido dezia que variando el tiempo si variaban las obligaciones."—Parescer de Feria, 1594.

a later period. But for this he possessed neither sufficient comprehension of the world, nor control over himself; he had been too long habituated to the actual possession of supreme authority, to renounce it at once: whilst he rejected his nephew, he cherished hopes for himself, and failed to observe that, under his very eyes, things were assuming an aspect completely hostile to his expectations.

## CHAPTER XXX.

## RELIGIOUS CHANGE OF HENRY IV.

WITH the household gods of a monarchic state, that is to say with its life, which is unaffected by the succession of generations, those of the ruling family are united from the very commencement in the closest manner. Their separation has often been attempted, and sometimes with success, but never without the greatest danger and the most violent commotions; for legitimacy is not merely an hereditary right, but in an unrevolutionized state it is the first of its laws, the key-stone as it were of the rest. It cannot be departed from except when the reigning family resists the demands of the country for independence, and an irreconcileable antagonism arises between the principles of the state and the interests of the reigning house.

The reverse of this was rather the case now in France.

At the first glance it is evident that if the schemes

of the Spaniards and the League were carried out, the French kingdom could no longer exist in its political individuality. Not merely the elevation of the Archduke to the throne, but even the reign of so weak a prince as young Guise, by the side of a woman of talent, who had been well instructed in the management of affairs by her father, and who lived in the Spanish Catholic ideas alone, would have cost the French their independence ; France would have become a portion of the great Catholic empire which Philip II. and his statesmen contemplated.

Thoughts like these might have passed through the minds of many, and awakened a feeling of opposition to the Spanish design ; but they were first clearly expressed by the great judicial corporation, the Parliament of Paris.

The Parliament set itself in opposition to the exclusive hierarchical efforts, as well as to those of a democratic tendency, even whilst it stood under the influence of the League. It contended openly against the instructions of a Papal Legate which ran counter to the ancient immunities of France, and also against the intention of the Estates to introduce the Tridentine decrees ; nor would the Parliament allow the Salic law to be transgressed, any more than the other fundamental laws of the kingdom. There could be no mistake as to its views : it at once limited the right of the Estates to proceed

to the election of a new king, by the proviso contained in its declaration that the election must take place according to the laws of the kingdom. When Inigo Mendoza wished to make his statement concerning the invalidity of the Salic law, the Attorney-General Molé refused to attend, though his presence was particularly desired, for without it the Parliament was excluded from the consultations of the Estates; but it was thought better that he should be absent\*. This speech however, instead of bringing conviction, awakened in general opposite ideas and remembrances. It was remarked that the maxim of natural hereditary succession, which Mendoza sought to recommend, would have confirmed the claims which the English kings had formerly made upon the French crown, and which their successors might very well renew once more. The condition of the state for centuries past would be thereby made out to be illegal. It was impossible that the Parliament could allow such views to prevail; whilst the Estates proceeded with their consultations respecting the elevation of the Infanta to the French throne, a resolution was formed, especially amongst the younger members of the Chambre des Enquistes, to oppose that proposal with earnestness, and with a certain degree of solemnity. The merit of having taken the initiative in this course was ascribed to a man who afterwards became celebrated, Michel

\* *Registre du Clergé*, in *Bernard*, 483.

de Marillac\*, nephew to the Archbishop of Vienne already mentioned. The First President, Le Maistre, and the Grande Chambre, agreed to the proceeding. They had probably no understanding with Mayenne, but they knew that he did not concur in the views of the Spaniards, nor in those of the majority in the Estates. It was a moment in which they could venture to attempt something; their opinions were announced with all possible reserve, and almost with an expression of hesitancy, but they were decisive.

On the 28th of June the Parliament drew up a solemn admonition to Mayenne, to prevent the crown from falling into the hands of a foreigner, under the pretext of religion; and in which it was declared that all which had been done or could be done towards raising a foreign prince or princess to the throne was and would remain null and void; for it was in opposition to the Salic law, and to other fundamental laws of the kingdom of France. In the afternoon the President, with twenty counsellors of the Palace of Justice, were seen proceeding along the Quai towards the residence of the Lieutenant-General, in order to present this resolution. Le Maistre, in a copious speech, explained the motives which had actuated the Parliament. He reminded Mayenne of the resistance made to

\* Le Beau, 'Vie de Marillac,' Maier, xv. 615, with excellent additions by Bernard, 736.

the interference of the Papal See in political affairs by the ancient kings,—Philip Augustus, Philip the Fair, and Louis XII.,—and also of his own oath\*. Mayenne showed some displeasure that so important a resolution should have been agreed to without previous consultation with himself; for the moment however it was not satisfactory to him†; but in France the feeling of the moment usually decides the result, and Mayenne yielded to the remonstrances of the President.

If we strip this event of all accidental circumstances, its sum and essence is this:—the supreme tribunal had, from an early period, renounced the severity of the ecclesiastical decrees and laws; since then, meanwhile, it had again partially consented to them; now however, when it was sought to apply them to the Crown itself, and apparently with earnestness, the Parliament stepped forth to oppose them with all its might. The ecclesiastical law, and previous excommunications, had excluded the hereditary king and all his posterity from the throne. Instead of acknowledging this, and consenting to the election of a new king, as it was proposed, the Parliament insisted upon the funda-

\* Extract from the Speech, in *Thuanus*, cvi. 545.

† Tassis, July 10: "No falta quien dice que la (the declaration of the Parliament) procuraron la madre, hermana, y muger del de Umena; mas puede dexarse de sospechar que aun el mismo Duque convino en ello, si ben dio despues alguna reprehension."

mental laws of the kingdom, in accordance with which the Prince, excluded by the ecclesiastical decrees, must have been called to the throne. The order of the Church, and of the Catholic system generally, had taken a position of antagonism to the order and necessities of the State. The aspect of affairs was nearly identical with that which had previously taken place in Germany, when the Ecclesiastical Princes, postponing their obligations to the Pope, resolved to acknowledge the religious peace, without which the nation could not exist. An ecclesiastical doctrinal manifestation came at the same time in aid of the political movement.

During the sittings of the Diet a conference took place, with the approval of Mayenne, between the Royalist bishops and the bishops attached to the League, chiefly at Suresne; but as yet it could not be said that any approximation had taken place between their several convictions. As it generally happens in discussions of the kind, the principles maintained by each party were more remarkable than what either gained from the other. The Royalists, who had come from the camp of Henry IV., placed the natural right of the hereditary king in the foreground. The Leaguers, who had been delegated by the city, declared that to acknowledge these rights in a non-Catholic prince was incompatible with their ecclesiastical duty. The latter, in support of their position, adduced examples from the

Old Testament and from the hierarchical ages ; the former appealed to the simple announcements of the Gospel, which assigned limits to the Protestants also. The Royalist bishops produced a profound impression however by asserting one day that their King would come over to Catholicism. It may perhaps be regarded as a recession from the extreme severity of the opinions and resolutions previously formed, that the chief of the Leaguers, Archbishop Espinac, declared that in that case it was not altogether impossible Henry might be acknowledged as King, always providing that the Papal absolution must precede such recognition ; for even were the Crown independent in temporal things, it was not so in matters of faith and religion. The Royalist theologians were very far from agreeing to this statement ; their leader, Renaud de Beaune, Archbishop of Bourges, proposed the question, what was to be done in case the Pope should happen to refuse absolution to the King\* ? Were the rights of the Crown to be made dependent upon foreigners ? He maintained that it would be perfectly satisfactory if the French hierarchy absolved the King, and that the consent and blessing of the Pope might be requested afterwards.

On the next Sunday the preachers of the city assailed Henry of Béarn in the fiercest and most

\* Detailed report of the sittings, in Cayet's Chronol. Novenn. Mich. xii. 447.

stormy manner : they called him an excommunicate, a relapsed heretic ; they declared they could not believe that the Pope, whom they regarded as only the expression of the strictest ecclesiastical principles, could ever absolve him ; he might become Catholic, their king he never should be ; they would not even hear of any further truce with him.

The preachers in this instance however were no longer so completely encouraged by the applause of the multitude ; the people wanted not merely opinions, but palpable effects.

The greatest detriment suffered by the cause of the League arose from the weakness and distance of the Spanish military force\*. The pretensions of the ambassadors became ridiculous the moment the force was removed, which alone could have made them impressive. On the other hand, the brave Béarnais was in the neighbourhood of the capital with his army ; his enterprises followed one another rapidly : men began to feel that they were not quite free from damage, nay that they were even in danger in the city.

It has often been remarked, and justly, that Henry's generalship was cast into the shade by the talent of Alexander Farnese, who knew much better how to make his military movements conduce to

\* Inigo Mendoza, May 30, 1593 : "No ay quien ne nos eche en rostro nostra desmidezza en armas y dineros ; otros nos predicen por impotentes, y disconflan de lo que promitimos."

the accomplishment of one object. There is however another kind of strategy, which has regard to great geographical relations, and of this Henry IV. possessed, I will by no means say the philosophy, but a practical feeling. At his first approach to Paris his principal care was to obtain possession of the positions which commanded the rivers; their recovery was also the first object which occupied him after the retreat of Farnese. In the same manner he conducted all his operations in the north of France, the subjugation of which was his problem, and, on this occasion, the north was coerced by the south. His greatest anxiety was to preserve the middle and lower Loire in his own hands. As he could not take either Rouen or Havre, it was of the greater importance to him either to maintain or to regain Quilleboeuf and Caudebec, and nothing caused bitterer complaints amongst the Leaguers of Normandy. He also kept the ports on the northern coast for the most part in obedience.

Henry has been ridiculed for having suspended important campaigns for the purpose of negotiating the marriage of Turenne with the heiress of Buillon; but the fact that by this means so important a place on the Meuse as Sedan came into the possession of a friend who could be relied on during the war, shows that this marriage was not without consequence to his entire scheme. The possession of St. Valéry on the Somme by the Duke of

Nevers, as already mentioned, was of still greater importance. Henry said that if Nevers had not succeeded, he would himself have marched upon the town\*. The mastery of the havens, and the command of the streams and passages of the rivers, gave him the dominion of the district, and occasioned a powerful reaction upon the great communes, which had been his most formidable enemies. The power of Paris, Rouen, and Orléans was already exhausted, and in a state of manifest decay. The towns of Picardy were in a somewhat better condition, but, as they had shared in the prosperity of the others, they were also affected by their decline. Henry's capture of Dreux, in July, 1593, was severely felt in the capital, where all had by degrees become weary of the war. During the conference at Suresne, and the truce which had been agreed to, and extended from time to time, on account of it, the Parisians enjoyed a foretaste of peace. A vast number had taken the opportunity of visiting their estates once more, and they were terrified at the idea of the truce being terminated; the Papal Legate, who was looked upon as an enemy to it, was even threatened with violence.

Considering the military superiority which the

\* 'Mémoire pour les Affaires de la France,' 1592, M. S. de Simancas: "Les villes Catholiques sont réduites en extrême langueur pour ne jouir de revenu quelconque, pour être privées de leur trafic ordinaire, et pour ne pouvoir vivre de leurs métiers."

King at this conjuncture undoubtedly possessed, and the necessity felt on the other side for peace, it may appear, that had he held his creed firmly, he might have reckoned upon a complete triumph. It was represented to him by zealous Huguenots that he might allow the Catholics to elect a man of straw to be their King ; that if they did so, all the venom of the enemy would be collected in one head, that he would then know with whom he had to contend ; it might be the more difficult way, but it was the way to make himself an absolute king. He was reminded of the personal danger he would incur by venturing into the midst of his enemies, where it would be impossible to defend him, and told that it would be better for him, should things come to the worst, to maintain himself independently in a corner of France, and surrounded with such persons only as he could place confidence in.

There was not a Protestant heart in the world which did not beat more rapidly at the thought of King Henry's succeeding in taking full possession of the French crown without passing over to another creed.

He was no longer however in a condition to form a free determination for himself. He was bound by the promise he had made immediately after the death of Henry III. He might have postponed the fulfilment of it as long as he was combating for his existence ; he might have rejected, as con-

trary to his honour, the admonitions coupled with threats which he had received from a party, designated emphatically as the third party, which had long existed, and now renewed its efforts. Could he however redeem his word without blushing for himself, that was the course which fully accorded with all his remaining interests.

Amongst the manifold requisitions to this effect which reached him even from the part of his friends, I find one which is particularly worthy of notice, and in which the religious change is represented as a duty of the royal office. The kingdom of France, it states, was regarded by every one who mixed in public affairs as a species of prey for himself, that robbery and murder traversed the land without control, and that atheism was springing up amidst the confusion of religious strife. For all this infamy and violence, for the oppression of the weak, the profanation of all that was holy, and every degree of insubordination ; the sole pretext was that the King was not a Catholic. If he were Duke of Vendôme only, he would be at liberty to act according to his own pleasure, but as King of France it was his supremely imperative duty to care for the kingdom. All the constituted authorities of the kingdom were Catholic, the exceptions being so few as to make no essential difference. And was not the Catholic Church after all, in reference to doctrine, order, and usage, the same ancient Church

which it had ever been? No one could deny the corruption of morals and the abuses of discipline which prevailed amongst the clergy; these however it was not for the Huguenots to reform, but for him, the King, the temporal head of the Church. Perhaps God had raised him up to re-establish the general unity once more; but before he could interfere with the Church, he must again stand forth as the eldest son of the Church.

To these general reasons were added the special circumstances of the moment. To found his State upon the attachment of the nobility alone, he was told, would be impossible, for no one could tell how long it would endure; at present he had the opportunity of winning over to his side the towns, which only waited for the occasion to exclude him; would he only recant, the wonted support of the clergy would not fail him; he would be master of the three Estates, but if not, it was to be apprehended that another king might be set up in opposition to him\*.

In fact, the adherents of young Guise and the Spaniards were now occupied most zealously with such a project, and certainly it behoved Henry not to allow matters to proceed to that point. An Anti-King, once named, might in process of time become the nucleus of all the antagonistic elements. There

\* "Supplication et avis au Roi de se faire Catholique :" MSS. in the Library of the Arsenal, Paris, No. 176.

was a spell in the royal title ; and how easily might the reflux of the Spanish tide bring to the League an amount of support and power far greater than what it now possessed ! An intestine war without end would be the consequence.

But would it not be an advantage to the Protestants themselves, should a prince ascend the throne who had belonged to them, who had risen by their aid, and was united to them by many ties ? Their cause would succeed by that means in a manner totally different from what would have been otherwise possible ; thus closely connected with the political power it could never again, as all believed, assume a persecuting character towards them. With Henry IV. the principle of toleration, which had been maintained in a few provinces, would appear to take possession of the French throne. In his person would lie the mediation of that opposition which could not otherwise be brought to an arbitration. This would be however a decision affecting not France alone, but all Europe.

Although antagonistic doctrines and unfettered energies ceaselessly struggled with one another for the ascendency in Europe, yet the final decision of the contest seldom depended upon them alone. At critical conjunctures a universal conviction was felt which confined the struggle within certain limits, and exercised over it, as it were, a superior and moderating power.

Henry IV. had always hitherto appeared as the champion of the Protestant interests, and, notwithstanding his declaration of 1589, his most essential support had been constantly derived from the Protestants; it had been looked upon therefore as the common interest of the Catholic world to oppose him. From this however had arisen various relations, which by degrees had become intolerable to the national feeling of the several states on the Catholic side. The King of Spain, the champion of the principle contended for, being in close alliance with the Papal See, obtained by means of the struggle against Henry a predominant power which was oppressive to all the other Catholic states. It became, for the Italian states in particular, an absolute condition of political existence that France should be independent.

The Venetians were the first to give utterance to this conviction. They were of opinion that the head of the Church, the Pope, might have political enemies, but that that was not the affair of a single State. The hatred which had arisen on account of religious differences, and which had broken up every other relation, must have a period at some time. The younger nobility, amongst whom these principles prevailed, took at that time a large share in the administration of public affairs, and the proposition to send an embassy to Queen Elizabeth was rejected by but a few voices. How much more

completely then did these ideas and observations apply to a prince who had already declared that he was willing to return to Catholicism! The Venetians were the first amongst the Catholics who acknowledged Henry IV.; they granted him supplies of money, and wished for nothing more ardently than for his triumph\*.

The relative position of the Grand Duke Ferdinand of Tuscany was still more peculiar, who was aroused not only through apprehension of Spain, but also and chiefly by jealousy of Savoy. Had Philip II. yielded to his request, and placed him in possession of Marseilles, Ferdinand might probably have united himself with the League; but Philip answered him that the times of Charles V., in which Tuscany was favoured, were gone by. From that moment Ferdinand took up the cause of Henry IV., sustained him with money for the enlistment of Swiss and for the payment of other troops, mediated a better understanding between him and his own brother-in-law, the Duke of Lorraine, and, what was more than all, obtained for him, through the Cardinal of Toledo, an undefined but at the same time highly promising access even to Rome itself. In return however, as men had begun on account of these proceedings to regard Ferdinand as a schismatic, he earnestly desired Henry's transition to Catholicism. He not only advised this step,

\* Relatione di Venetia, 1590: MS. Bibl. Barberini.

but urged Henry to take it within an appointed time, after the lapse of which he would otherwise be compelled to renounce his connection.

It thus happened that the political relations of Europe generally concurred to render the change of religion advisable in Henry. It appears that it was attempted to induce the Protestant German princes to give their consent beforehand; this however, as we may easily conceive, was not to be effected. What were the King's own views meanwhile? He was determined first either to conquer the League or to come to a reconciliation with it, and then to make his recantation\*; but considering the danger of the period in France and also in Italy, he could not place much expectation upon such uncertain consequences. The recantation must be at the same time a means of victory and of reconciliation.

The declaration of Henry IV. that he sacrificed his convictions to his duty, though not altogether true, contains some truth. He regarded the pacification of France and the re-establishment of the balance of political power in Europe as his duty. As regarded the doctrinal questions involved, there was not much to be said: the whole difficulty con-

\* "Egli avrebbe voluto prima vincere o pacificarsi con i Cattolici, e poi abbracciare la lororeligione."—Galluzzi, Storia di Toscana, v. 156. An authentic account of the communications from France to the Grand Duke, and of the most important official reports, is greatly to be desired for the history of those times. Rommel has a notice of the mission to Germany: N. Hess. Gesch. i.

sisted in making the retraction morally possible to the prince.

No one had exercised a greater influence in this matter than Jacques Davy du Perron, who had himself seceded from the Protestant faith, in which he had been educated by his zealous parents. He was a man of universal literary accomplishments ; he had succeeded well even in poetical attempts ; his philosophy was of a diversified character, and his conversation agreeable. His letters exhibit a changeful appearance of flattery, which yet has nothing obtrusive in it ; it was through a letter in which there was a happily-turned phrase that he made the nearer acquaintance of the King. Sully afterwards adopted his interests, and raised him from one degree of favour to another.

One of the chief arguments with which the King was solicited was that the Romish Church, notwithstanding all its abuses, still remained the Church, and offered the means of salvation\*. Even Protestant clergymen who had come from Geneva confirmed this view ; others, who were restricted by the political state of affairs, preferred keeping silence. They were acquainted with the King's inclination, and saw the unavoidableness of the step. A formal disputation they evaded, for even though they should be victorious they would appear as if conquered.

Henry IV. was terrified when the denial was

\* Aubigné, Hist. Univ. iii. 291.

suggested to him of a whole series of doctrines which he had hitherto confessed, and declined to subscribe a confession of faith so extensive\*.

The intention appears clearly from the letter, so often printed, which he wrote on the 23rd of June to Gabrielle D'Estrées. He had arrived at St. Denis the evening before. "To-day," said he, "I begin to converse with the bishops; on Sunday I am to take the dangerous leap."

On the 25th of June, in the church of St. Denis, at the feet of the Archbishop of Bourges, Henry declared that he was willing to live and die in the Roman Apostolical Catholic Church, and to protect and defend it. Upon this, the Archbishop gave him absolution, and received him into the bosom of the Church.

It was not to the Church persecuting with fire and sword that Henry went over; that Church would have rejected him. It was the doctrines of the Royalist clergy to which he acceded, and it was that party which accepted him. They consented to the toleration of the Huguenots, which was the essence of the event.

\* "Il dit à M<sup>r</sup> du Plessis, que luy étant présentée à signer une profession de foy, en laquelle il abjurroit par le menu tous les points controvers avec les Papistes et juroit les contraires, il en eut horreur et le refusa, les priant de se contenter qu'il rentroit en l'Eglise, en espérance de la balaier un jour puisqu'il seroit dedans."—Vie de Duplessis-Mornay, 186.

Even the great Catholic nobles who surrounded the King promised to the Huguenots the re-establishment of the Edict of Pacification, which had been suspended by the League. The King summoned the deputies of the Reformed churches, and hinted to them that they had not made such good use of the favourable moment as they might have done. When they came together in September, at Nantes, he made no opposition to their renewing the oath to live and die in their religion, and at the same time a commencement, at least, was made towards reviving the Edict of Pacification.

Had Henry's adoption of Catholicism taken place earlier, it would have been productive of feebler effect. The faction which held him under all circumstances to be disqualified, and which had declared him incapable of ecclesiastical absolution, had been much too strong up to the present moment ; and the opinion prevailed even amongst the so-called third party, that the King must be a person who had never belonged to the Huguenots. The general bias of men's minds was then in favour of the union between exclusive Catholicism and civic liberty under the protection of the Spaniards, whose arms and money still held all in dependency and expectation. The campaigns against Alexander Farnese would not, in fact, have had a more successful issue had Henry been a Catholic.

Now however that great general was no more.

The pecuniary assistance yielded by the Spaniards was sparing; their troops were removed; their previous pretensions, which had been encouraged by the French themselves, were now felt by them to be intolerable. They began to regard Henry IV. as the champion of the national independency, and at the same time as their rescuer from the fearful disorders and desolations of war. All felt once more the necessity for a strong hereditary authority, and were they then to stumble at the non-fulfilment of all that was required by the strict doctrine? To the majority of men, the great characteristics of doctrine are all that is perceptible, and the essential desideratum consisted in the religious change considered in the abstract.

The League felt from the first moment the difficulty of the position in which this step on the part of the King would place it, and its members assembled together once more. Under the guidance of the Legate, Mayenne, Guise, Aumale, Elboeuf, La Chastre, Rosne, St. Paul, the Archbishop Espinac, and the representatives of Mercœur, bound themselves to preserve their union, to conclude no peace with "Navarre," but, on the other hand, to renew the war against him as soon as the Spanish assistance should arrive, and they should have come to a common understanding regarding the form to be given to the monarchy. But this was now no longer possible. Feria and the Spaniards remained

firm in the intention to call Guise to the throne. Mayenne could not be induced to approve of that course. Sometimes he made objections to the person of his nephew; and sometimes he advanced claims of his own which never could be fulfilled; at last he declared plainly that whilst the conflicting claims were French against French, he would give place to no one.

Feria endeavoured to raise a party against him, between Guise and Aumale, who were joined by Espinac also, but this only effected the entire dissolution of the confederacy.

Nemours endeavoured to take possession of Lyons on his own account. Merceour pursued his peculiar policy in Brittany. Tassis remarks that every governor of a district and every commandant of a castle conducted himself as if he were king, and appropriated the public money, and that the same was done by the towns. There was so little trace of consistency or common order in the kingdom, that the deputies of the States in Paris had no other means of support but the pecuniary supplies of the Spaniards\*.

Under these circumstances, Henry IV. refused to prolong the truce. If we call to mind that Mayenne assigned it as his motive for the conclusion of the truce, the fact that without it the union

\* "Los consejeros han de comer de allí."—Papers of Simancas.

could no longer be preserved, we may estimate the effect which this step must have had.

The war broke out afresh. Henry was by far the more powerful in the field. The League, in complete ruin, could make no defence against him. What further remained for those endangered by his progress, or to the ambitious who wished to ascend higher, except to unite themselves with the King, against whom they had hitherto contended?

The first consequence of the religious change was that it enabled many who desired to go over to Henry to do so now without shame.

Though the Protestantism of Henry had been frequently but a mere pretext for resistance, yet it was of the greatest advantage to him that that pretext was now removed. Let us not however contemplate the personal aspects of the question alone, however effective they may have been. There were many who regarded submission to the hereditary and now Catholic King as the only means of putting a period to the confusion of the country.

The first distinguished military leader who resolved to go over from the League to the King, was a man who had left him on his accession, because, as he said, he could not serve a Huguenot. He now declared that since the King had become a Catholic, there was no longer any lawful reason to refuse him obedience, and that to make war against him would be not a religious movement, but an act of

ambition and usurpation\*. This was Vitry, the governor of Meaux. The town, whose keys he delivered up, followed his example voluntarily. The Spaniards were doubly sensitive to the loss of this place, because it was the key to the connection between Paris and the Netherlands.

The next to follow Vitry's example was one of the most trusted adherents of the Guises, La Chastre, who delivered Orléans and Bourges into the hands of Henry IV. He assigned it as his reason for this step, that the inhabitants were apprehensive of falling under foreign dominion, and that the maintenance of religion was now secured†. He admonished Guise, at the same time, no longer to allow himself to be betrayed by foreigners.

Feria lays the blame of both these secessions upon Mayenne, who had been warned in vain, and who, he says, might have easily come to the assistance of the Catholics of Orléans, had he wished, but instead of that he made the Béarnais King‡.

Lyons, through the disunion of the Leaguers, soon

\* *Le Manifeste de M. de Vitry, Gouverneur de Meaux, 1594.* In the preface it states that "ce scrupule (de religion) cessant, celuy est misérable, vayne, exécrable, qui se targue de ce faux prétexte.

† Compare the declaration in Bouillé, iv. 266.

‡ In contradiction to what has been narrated by others, Feria states that the secession of Vitry was but little felt by Mayenne: "Quedó tan poco disgustado da Vitri, avendo hecho tan grande traicion, que despues della embió certas joyas."

fell into the hands of Henry IV. The Parliament of Aix began again to deliver legal judgements in his name. The Romish court had once more rejected Henry's declaration of obedience, not without official harshness: this did not prevent the French however from gathering round their King. His coronation, which took place at Chartres on the 27th of February, 1594, was performed in a spirit of opposition to Rome; for, it was said, it would be an admission which would render the rights of the Crown doubtful, were this ceremony postponed because the absolution of the Pope had not been granted. Perhaps the Pope himself was not altogether so displeased with this contempt of his authority as he appeared; but of this no one in the country had any suspicion, and, without the approval of Rome, the provinces made known their consent with joy\*.

Meanwhile everything was prepared in the capital for a great alteration. There were appointed houses in the different quarters, where the adherents of the King assembled, and concerted the measures they should take, and even the manner in which they should express themselves. They now found a hearing even amongst the people, who were tired of the

\* Henry describes the coronation as an "action sainte, où le peuple constitue beaucoup d'efficace. Toute l'église (a été) pleine de peuple, qui a monstré, par trois signes d'allégresse, toute l'affection qui se peut tesmoigner envers son prince."—Lettre à M. de Beauvoir, 1594, dern. Févr.: Lettres Missives, iv. 101.

declamation of the preachers, and could not live longer without peace. But that peace, it was said, they could not have without acknowledging the King, whose power prevailed all over the land. In the beginning Henry had been regarded almost as a foreigner, but since then he had made himself the general subject of conversation by his gallant actions in war. The reputation of his personal qualities was widely circulated. "He was good and wise, and people must throw themselves into his arms." Fanatical opinions, whether political or religious, resembled mists, which, rising suddenly, conceal things for the moment from the eye, but a time comes when they are dissipated. Mayenne superseded the governor of the city, who had associated with the moderate party\*, and appointed in his place a man of unsuspected reputation amongst the Leaguers—the same Count de Brissac who had taken the lead at the barricades ; he was however no longer so completely to be relied upon : as he had formerly felt himself neglected by Henry III., so did he now by the Guises†. Instead of resisting

\* Ibarra adds, that Mayenne had been requested by the members of the States who were still present, "que echasse fuera los enemigos, y meter mas gente de S. Md." (namely Spaniards); but he was afraid in that case that he would cease to be master.

† "Pieno di occulto dolore," Davila, xiv. 909. Commentarii: "In Poitou la maggior parte de' gentilhuomini si misero col Duca d'Elboeuf, havendo lui preso con consenso di cittadini il governo di Poitiers, et exclusone Brissac."

the general movement, he yielded to it; and when Henry IV. offered to create him a marshal of France, he did not hesitate to withdraw from that party to the formation and effectiveness of which, he asserted, he had contributed most, nor to unite with the King. The civic authorities had an understanding with him, and on the 22nd of March, 1594, Henry was able to enter Paris without any opposition. He proceeded through the streets in complete armour, his helmet adorned with the white plumes which had become so renowned in his battles, at the head of a numerous body of the nobility, and surrounded by the marksmen of his guard. When he arrived at Notre Dame, the populace crowded round him, and greeted him with acclamations a thousand times repeated. It sometimes appeared to him almost like a dream, that his long wished-for return to the capital, which he had so often sought to effect by force of arms, should at length be accomplished so easily, and without effort; but things had gradually become ripe for it. He made it known to the Spaniards that he was come to take possession of that which belonged to him, that the people had recalled their King. Feria's answer was not without dignity: he said he had been sent to protect the people, but since the people had submitted, he would leave the city with his soldiers, which he did without delay.

One of Henry's first visits was to the Duchess of

Montpensier, who was looked upon as his bitterest enemy. She was astonished at finding so much favour from him, but Henry's principal object was at present to reconcile the Guises, as well as the house of Lorraine, to himself. A multitude of the fiercest preachers, Boucher amongst the rest, left the city in company with the Spaniards ; others followed them voluntarily, and some were compelled to take the same course. In all the quarters there were some citizens who were also obliged to abandon the capital, but to all the rest a full amnesty was granted. Instead of the priestly and popular doctrines, the Royalist opinions were now expounded and enforced once more. In St. Germain l'Auxerrois a Royalist preacher, named Bellanger, declared the former teachers to be seducers of the people ; he spoke especially of the obedience due to the King, and designated it as heresy to maintain the contrary. The King himself was present, and sat directly opposite to the preacher\*.

Villars, at Rouen, now no longer hesitated to make his peace, although he had at the same time with Brissac been implicated in the last renewal of the League ; he also received considerable grants of money, and retained the dignity of an admiral, which had been transferred to him. In return he exerted himself so that Rouen, Havre, and a number of towns besides, acknowledged the King. Henry

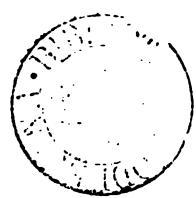
\* L'Estoile, 220.

expressed his hopes that the pacification of the whole kingdom would result from his possession of the beautiful, extensive, and rich province\*.

Paris, Orléans, and Rouen had always been regarded as the three chief cities of the League; they were all now in the hands of the King. The cities of Picardy soon followed them. It happened then as it always has happened in France: a common impulse had actuated men in joining the League, another now led them back to obedience; no one could explain to himself the reason of the alteration in his mind. This universal change of disposition was at that time designated by the word Revolution.

\* Henri IV. à M. de Bourdeille, 31 Mars, 1594. Lettr. Miss. iv. 130.

END OF VOL. II.



8







